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ABSTRACT

Three issues of a literacy magazine contain articles written by and for individuals learning English writing skills. Most of the articles are personal narratives or accounts of significant personal experiences. These pieces are divided into sections according to skill level. One section consists of student writings with brief commentaries on style or tone. A section on theory and practice provides more in-depth discussion of aspects of the writing process. Book reviews and information about the contributors are also included. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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FORWARD

ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

The concept for *Voices* magazine grew out of years of language learning and instruction observed and experienced. In particular, our experience and observations over the past four years, while working with adults struggling to improve their reading and writing abilities, made clear the need for this publication.

Four years ago we began to develop a program in which adults could work to improve literacy skills. We started small, but enrolled more than 300 students in our fourth year. We have learned much in this time and expect to continue to learn. We see *Voices* as an opportunity both to share what we have learned and to continue learning from our attempts and your responses.

This magazine is a reflection of our program and of our strong beliefs about language learning. The material within these pages reflects our belief that curriculum and instructional approach be learner centred. Language learning must be viewed as a process. And learners, as well as those who support the learners' struggle for language skill acquisition, must see that process as being at least as important as product. We feel that learning best occurs through observation, dialogue and practice. In addition, we believe that much of the reading material promoted for use with adult beginning readers does not meet the needs of adult language learners, who must be exposed to a wide range of reading material and encouraged to use these materials. Students indicate that beginning readers find the works of beginning writers both motivational and instructional.

Therefore, the majority of the writing in this magazine is student produced. Most of the non-student text, especially the *Work/Notes* commentary is written to assist learners and tutors. The writing in the *Theory/Practice* section, more difficult than other materials in the magazine, is aimed toward readers of varying abilities.

The body of the magazine has been segmented into four sections: *New Writers/First Words*, *Transitions/Later Writings*, *Work/Notes* and *Theory/Practice*.

New Writers/First Words contains selections with the easiest readability. *Transitions/Later Writings* is from students further along in the writing process and perhaps more difficult in its readability. We feel the power of the material will draw struggling readers into the writing in both these sections.

Work/Notes is designed to instruct and motivate beginning writers, and to offer support for the writing process. The selections here are of varying readability and can be read with or without the commentary.

Theory/Practice is a forum for sharing experiences, ideas, and views. While the contents may be technical at times, this is a magazine by learners, for learners, and the material must be as learner usable as possible.

The concepts expressed in this magazine are not original to us. What is surprising, however, is that so few adult programs experiment with these ideas, preferring instead to use the more traditional methods that failed learners their first time around. We hope *Voices* will encourage the development of true learner centred programs and will eventually become a useful tool for them. ■

**“Language
learning
must be
viewed as a
process...”**

Voices

New Writers for New Readers

Volume 1, Number 1



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The policy of **Voices** is to keep intact the original manuscript style of works by new writers.

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NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS

Dark To Dark

RAY BERNARD

Here I am writing again. This is going to be hard I know. But I must do it anyway.

I've been working from dark to dark. I am too tired to write anything. Today I worked near Lynn Valley Road. I was there no more than ten minutes and fell down three times. And if I fell down one more time I was going home. The roof was very slippery. The boss hit his finger several times. He said, "If I hit my finger one more time, I am going home." When I started school, I couldn't read a book. But now I can read a book, but I get stuck on some words.

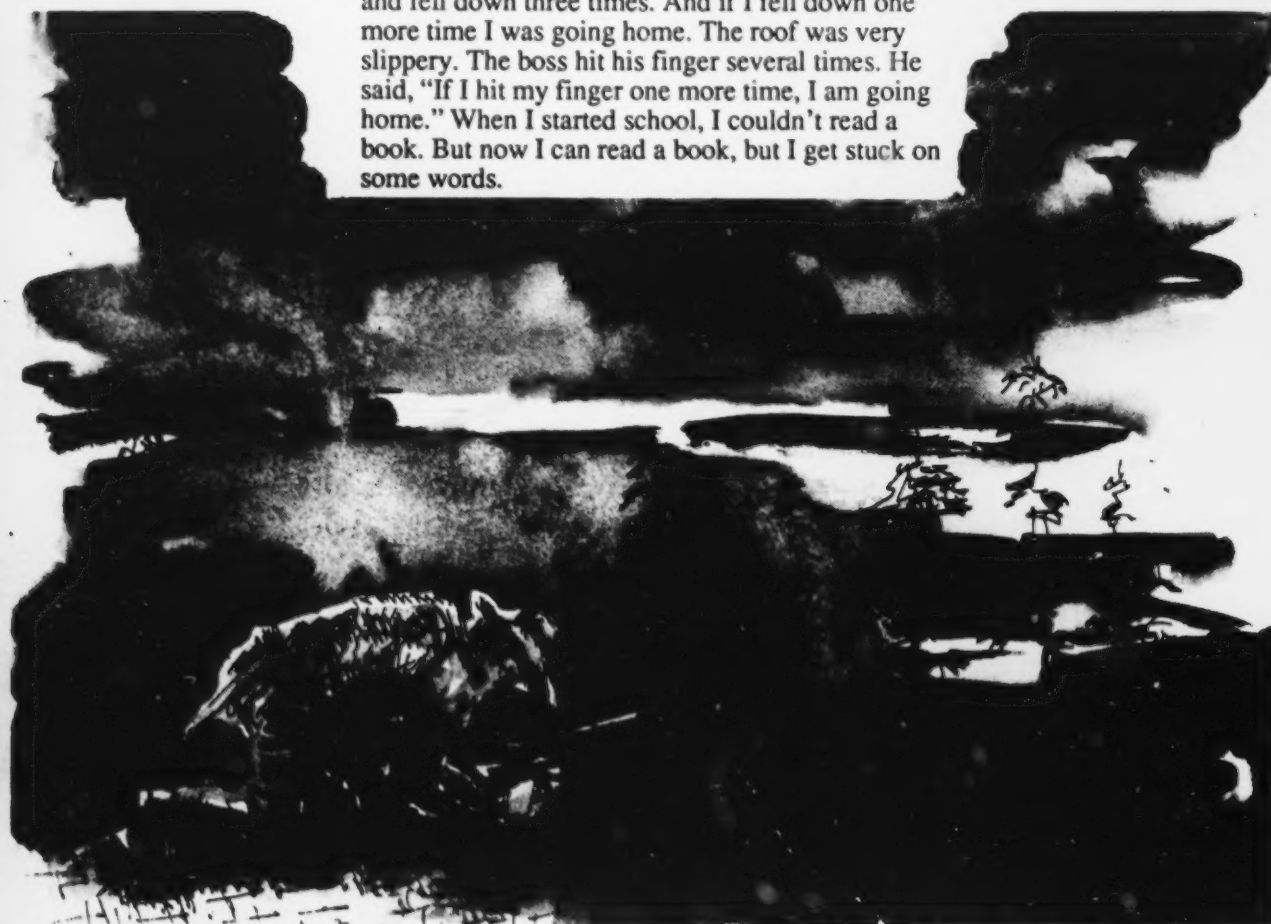


Illustration: Cindy Caird

Family

HAROLD "BUD" GAUNT

My Parents

On September 1944 my mother died of sugar diabetes. She was only 47 and I was only eleven. I didn't know my mother too well, because I was too young to remember her. My Dad said that she was a very strong willed woman. After her death my father brought me up until 1984, when he died of cancer. He was very good to me and I miss him very much. Every so often when I feel depressed I go to the cemetery and talk to him. Then when I get back home I feel better.

Brother

My brother joined the navy as a leading torpedo man in 1941. He was in many battles but never wounded. After the war he joined B.C. Hydro as a bus driver. He worked for them for a year, and then he went on the DEW Line for a year. He also laid floor tiles until he got back on hydro in the punching department in Vancouver. Then he was moved to disposal where he will be until the end of the month when he retires.



Photo: Sarah Leen

My Life

When I was born in 1933 my mother, father, sister and brother were very happy. I was a very noisy baby. My mother said she would like to throw me away. I lived with my parents for eleven years until my mother died of sugar disease in 1944. My father brought me up for the rest of my life until he died in 1984. Now I live alone.

Dad

My dad came to Canada in 1925. He landed in Vancouver with nineteen dollars. He came across the country on a freight train. When he got here, he knew no one. He had to count every penny he spent. Finally he got a job with Jack Eckersley as a cement finisher. He worked for him for sixteen years. Then he got a job at MacMillan Bloedel in the boiler room. He worked there from 1941 until 1965 when he had a heart attack and had to quit. He never made it to 25 years. If he had, they would have given him a gold watch.

Sister

My sister is a very energetic woman. When we first moved here, she worked for Woodward's in the toy department. That was in 1938. Then she worked for C.P.A. during the war as a riveter. After the war she went back to Woodward's part time in the grocery department. Then she became head of special projects until she retired.

A Very Special Goat

JEAN WRIGHT

Once when I was a little girl about seven years old, my Godmother gave me a female goat and she said to me that the goat was to help school me. I said to her "How is it going to school me?" She said, "The goat will have babies. They will grow up and your mom will see them and make money. The money will be used to buy you a uniform, books, pens and pencils for school."

Anyway, I took my goat home. I was very happy that I got a goat for myself. My goat grew into a big mother goat. She had one baby kid. The kid grew up and my mom sold it. A year and a half later my goat was pregnant to have two more kids.

One night the whole family went to bed, and while we were in bed sleeping, we heard the dogs barking loudly outside and getting very cross. So we all got up and went into the living room wondering what was making the dogs so cross. My dad said to my mom that he was going to go outside to see what was going on. My mom jumped to her feet and stopped my dad from going outside to see what it was. My mom said to my dad, "We don't know what it is. You may go out there and get killed. It is too late." It was about four o'clock in the morning. We all went back to bed and after awhile the dogs stopped barking.

Well, it was morning now, and my dad was the first one to get up and go outside and check the chickens, pigs, and the goats. I was on my way outside when I heard my dad call out to mom, "Come here quickly!" So we all ran out to the goats' pen. My dad was crying. Someone had been in the goat pen and had killed off twelve head of goats. I looked quickly to see if my goat was alright, but she was

Illustration: Pippa Smyth



not. She was wounded by a knife cut. "Oh! My God!" I said. I was crying for my goat because she was groaning and groaning. Two days later she died with the two kids inside her. We buried her. I used rocks to build her tomb.

I am now in my thirties and I still remember this even though it was more than twenty years ago. I think as long as I live I will remember what someone did to my goat. I was very close to her.

On October 19, 1984 I went to see her tomb. I just broke down in tears because I still loved my goat. When you finish reading this story you may think I am crazy, but I'm not. To end my tragic story I gave my goat a name. Her name was Betsy.



Photo: Ann Yow

Anna's Village

ANNA ARMIT

I was born in a small village in Nova Scotia which was called Hubbard's Point. When I say small, I mean small. There were only twenty-five homes in our village, plus a store, a post office and a one-room school house. In our school we had what they call grade zero, which would be what they call kindergarten now. So we had from grade zero to grade nine. In the morning the teacher would give assignments to the older children, and then it was our turn, the younger children. We would have to stand up one at a time and say our ABCs as far as we could go, and then it was on to numbers. By this time the older children would have their assignments done. The teacher would go back to working with the older children. It would not take too long for us seven-year-olds to lose interest in ABC and 1-2-3 and to start socializing. I can tell you that the teacher was not impressed with us. Afternoon was spelling and

reading, the younger ones and older alike.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays was French lesson, and Thursdays were our English class, if you could call it that. All the English class consisted of was half a day of reading and spelling, and in the afternoon was French again. On Friday afternoons we had a book in which we practiced our letters, and writing. To my knowledge these books are no longer in the schools.

The first Friday of the month was a busy one for us, as we had to go to church for catechism and confession, seeing that we were all good Catholics in our village.

Some of the boys and girls went on to high school and university; others left school, as I did at the age of fourteen to go to work. If I had not been sick for two years (age eleven and twelve) who knows, maybe I would have gone on to high school as well.

Joe and I

RUTH

Mark left early tonight. He's tired, so Lee and Yom are there tonight. It was Joe and me. I listened to Joe read out loud. I hope he did not mind me listening. I really think Joe's story was beautiful. One night I would like to read one of my stories to you. I think Joe, our talk tonight about our school time went very well. I felt good about it, because I understand where we come from. This makes me feel good about coming back.

**"I listened to Joe
read out loud. I
hope he did not
mind me listening."**



Photo: Skal Fowler

Italy it Was

NICOLINA AMATO

When I was 9 and growing up in Italy I remember one of my aunts making silk from worms that she fed with leaves of a tree. She made the worms eat the leaves for five months, and then they would go into a cocoon and become a small boll ball. Then she put a big pot of boiling water on the fire for a long time and then she stirred the cocoons to break them up and she would pull 2 threads at a time. I loved to watch her doing it because the silk was a golden colour naturally and it was just beautiful. She made special material for her daughter's hope chest with a loom. The silk thread was very strong also.

Hell In My Classroom

ARTHUR SIEMENS

I was scared to go back to school. I did want to go to a college in Surrey, but the test stopped me. If you want me to get the course noticed by the government, let me write a letter to them.

I was pushed through school. Sometimes I am last with my schooling because the reading was not important to them. So I was a Joe-boy in school. That is why I am going to school now. I did not learn in the regular system. I was like a retard in my school. It was like hell in my classroom. Some did learn and some did not.

A Book On Cleaners

ARTHUR SIEMENS

I would like to get a book on cleaners from some janitorial service. I would make my own store, my own business selling and buying things for my boss. Things that I could get discounts and deals on. I would like to get into wholesale if I can. I would like to be trained in sales and bargaining. Someday I would be able to have my own business. Sometimes I think that I'm my own boss. I have learned a lot in the time that I have been in school. Can you get me anything on janitorial that I could use for practice? Is there a school where I can go to get it in Surrey? I

have to try one thing at a time, not everything at once. Maybe I should stay out of school for a while and work. Sometimes I am finding things difficult. But I can do things that another person cannot. Can you run a floor machine or a buffer? Some cannot even wax a floor. Can you do all of that without going to school? I can because I have been trained to do it. For instance, for all the things I have listed, do you need a grade 12 education? No. You just need a good memory and lots of money.

Retirement

RON GODDARD

Retirement is what you work all your life for. When you're young you work and save, hoping to have the money to enjoy your old age. So when you're young you should spend the money you make by trying to better yourself. For when you're old, you're scared to spend the money you have. When you're trying to raise a family you live payday to payday. And when you're old you live day by day. What I am looking forward to is to not have to get up

at 5:30 in the morning and go to work. Instead, I could get up and go fishing for the day and not have to worry about the kids, if they are home yet or not. So if I went up North with my wife, we would not have to pack up and go as soon as we do. Yes, to have that kind of time would be nice for you may not have too many years like that left. You must always remember you're a long time dead.

Feeling

LINDA DOERKSEN

It's really hard to think people like to hurt other people. True I try to understand why they do hurt people. I know people don't do it on purpose, and maybe people who are doing the hurting don't stop and think what they hurting until it's too late. I guess that's life. Some people are sincerely mean. You have to take the good with the hard feeling too. You hope it will pass and you can forget it, or maybe try to talk about whatever hurt you in the first place. I really hope people can work things out...

Dear Sir

RUTH

I was watching the Journal's piece on Adult Literacy Feb. 11/86. As an adult who has reading problems, I was not too impressed with the announcer because he made me feel like I had a disease. Because as an adult illiterate it was not all my fault. In the 1950's schools just failed you or put you in a special class because that made them happy. Because we were out of the way we would not be any problem to them. One thing they forgot was we grew up. And now we are unemployed or on welfare or part of the working class. I have been looking for some help for over twenty years. I have found help now, thanks to the TV news. But even then the broadcast almost made me miss it. On the news program they had a story on Adult Literacy programs in Surrey, B.C. The interviewer asked about the subject of literacy. There were two Adult Literacy teachers talking, and I was so interested in it. The newsman said, "Sorry I do not have time to put the phone number on TV. People can look it up in the

phone book." How can you look it up in the phone book if you cannot read or spell? I was so mad. But at the end of the program they showed the phone number. I feel that the interviewer should tell people how to get in touch with the program.

I have been going to the Young Adult Literacy Program for two nights a week. I was told I have a grade three reading level. I thought I had grade eight. But they tested me first, so now I know where I stand. So now I'm reading books. I have never read a book before. I am also writing a lot. I have been very lucky in jobs. Right now I am making \$15.95 an hour, and nobody knows I cannot read or spell at my jobs because we are professionals at hiding it. I know I have for thirty years. I just hope the governments open their eyes so our kids don't have to go through what I did. In this day and age they should not have to. The government should hire back teachers before it's too late.

I Watch TV

ROSA CISZEK

I'm one of those women who prefers to watch TV than to spend time chatting with my friends. I'm not saying that I'm not a social person. On the contrary I'm very friendly, but I choose to watch TV more than to chat.

There are quite a few things that bother me regarding some TV programs, or movies. Take soap operas for instance. They are basically about rich people with marriage problems, hate among families, cheating among couples, and violence among people. People tend to automatically do what they see on TV, so my opinion is why not reverse things around putting more emphasis on poor people, good marriages, no hate among family, no cheating among couples, and most importantly, no violence. If people

would learn more to love and help each other this world would be a better place to live.

There is a program shown on TV every so often that breaks my heart, and also makes me angry. The program's name is: "Famine in the World".

Every time I watch it, I can't stop crying and feeling guilty for what I have, even though I don't have or never had very much myself. It's almost hard to believe that when some people have so much, others die day after day for not having the most important things like: food, drink and clothing.

It breaks my heart to see children, as well as other people who are skin and bones, stuck in a corner and waiting to die, or waiting for some food. All this is so unfair, and I feel that if people would care more, this wouldn't happen. I only wish I had the power to rule the world. If so, I would make sure there would be no famine in the world, and I also would make sure that there would be equality among people and that there would be peace and love in the world.

People I Miss

ROBIN BURWASH

The last time I wrote about people I been missing and should visit. There was two ladies I missed, Granny Fomich and Hazel Peacock formerly Hazel Fomich. Granny is eighty-eight. At that age I should visit soon. Granny used to live down the street from my parents and in the fall moved into an old age pensioners home. It took three homes before she felt comfortable with the people and staff.

She lived on her own for the last 10 years and found it difficult to adjust to the crowds. I talked to her on the phone at Christmas and she sounded spry as ever. Granny has only met Maureen (my wife) a couple of times and just loves her. She always said, "I wish Billy (her grandson and my oldest and very close friend) could find a girl like Maureen. He always has one he meets in the bar. They drink too much and swear, not nice girls like your Maureen."

I think the most memorable thing about Granny out of thousands of things she has done for or with me and Bill, was when Bill lived next door to his

Granny with his Dad at this time. His Dad being an older man, and head of the Alberta Wheat Pool at that time, was out of town quite a lot. The house was the meeting place for all of

our friends. Quite often when his Dad was out of town we would start drinking and partying and just carry on quite late. Back to the point.

Granny would come over. But she would put her dog Skipper on a thirty foot rope and he would round the corner first. She called him the inspector. She would wander around the party and tell us we should not drink and especially the girls. But if anyone was staggering or really drunk she would give them a piece of her mind. Granny in her Russian accent would say "you should save your money; don't drink it all up. I remember Grandpa when he died, he had nothing because he would drink it all up and buy some bar floozy a drink to sit on his knee. He was not a good man. It killed him." A different story for each person.

Photo: Ann Yow



TRANSITIONS

LATER WRITING

Men

DUNCAN HARPUR

Were men put on this earth to work themselves to death for their women? At times, it seems this way. Men have been killing themselves and others for their ladies throughout history; and now it is just a slower death.

As your loving wife kisses you off to work in the morning little does she know of the hazards of the workplace which are killing you slowly. Her morning kiss is just as deadly as the fair maiden's kiss for her knight as he goes off to battle.

Duncan's Window

DUNCAN HARPUR

Well this is my first homework I have done in quite some time. I left it till Sunday night just like when I was in school. I was notorious for leaving my homework till the last minute if it got done at all.

I am finding it hard to think of things to write about, so I will tell you what I see out the window. At the same time I will try to make it exciting for you the reader.

As I gaze out this kitchen window I can see the golf course. As the golfer steps up to the tee he appears calm but to this trained eye the bullets of sweat are not from pulling his cart. They are from the pressure of the course. As we all know the second hole is a tough one. He lines up the ball on the 750 yard hole with a left curve

at about 175 yards up the fairway; it is nearly impossible.

It is quite funny to watch this man address the ball, he has the grace of a cow and the speed of a turtle. As he lines up for his drive he has the skill of Jack Nicklaus on a beach ball with toes. As he winds up to drive the ball his perfect form looks funny on a fat man with short arms and legs. Whoever said that all men are created equal never saw this man play golf. After he hit the ball it went straight into the largest tree in my backyard. The moral of the story is that short armed men should never play golf no matter how good their form is.

Jim Plop

JILL KRISTOFFERSON

My father had always been crazy about crows so one day he decided to get himself one. He went out into the back yard and after some time he found a nest of fledglings. He climbed up a large Douglas fir to reach the nest where he snatched up a baby crow and stuffed it into his big pocket. When he got home he made this crow a cage which had all the comforts of home: light bulb to keep warm, water to drink and food to eat. After the cage was finished and the crow was in his new home, father called everybody into the laundry room, which was where the cage was kept, to tell everyone that the crow's name was Jim.

As the days and weeks went by, we all watched Jim grow into a large black crow. By this time he was flying all over the house and outside of the house getting into all kinds of trouble. Jim loved to poke at cigarette packages. If you put your cigarette package down anywhere, Jim would be there in a flash to poke and

poke until every cigarette had holes in it. He would also steal everything that was shiny in the house, especially spoons. Then he would hide it outside somewhere, but he always brought back some other piece of junk to replace what he had taken. Sometimes, Jim would dive at you if you had something that he wanted. Because Jim had freedom to fly anywhere in the house he would also do his dirty jobs whenever and wherever he liked. That is why we renamed him Jim Plop.

One Xmas holiday, in the year of 1968, my father had a drink or two too much which we very seldom saw. In the kitchen, my father took Jim Plop and put him in the fridge and then put the turkey in the cage. About an hour later we found the bird in the fridge, and boy was he mad.

Come spring, Jim flew outside a lot and one day he just didn't come home. We just figured that the call of mother nature must have come upon him.



Illustration: Pippa Smyth

Plugs or Bugs

MERILYN BAILEY

Electricity these days,
I question if it pays
especially when it comes
down to the modern computer.

My pencil needed sharpening
I plugged in the plug
to my surprise: nothing
what a bug.

Manually I sharpened
this pencil of mine,
yet to hear at the computer
she lost it all on time.

What are friends for
a question I ask?
Mind you one might
say not an easy task.

The computer lesson was learned,
we will rant and rave.
With great caution
we will type and save.



Photo: Anne Burrows



Illustration: Pippa Smyth

Steer Your Ship

DARREL ROBINSON

Get on board and
Hoist the sails,
Set the mast and
Steer your ship,
Make it fast
When winds do stir, the sails draw tight.
Then your dreams take restless flight
Long since dusk and through your sleep
Onto dawn while still so deep
The ship draws near and close to shore
When bell chimes bid welcome
Climb on board, this morning shines
Today is here and I'll be fine.
Just let winds blow my sails on through the day
And make life's dreams come my way.

After the Bombing

HIEP HOANG

After the city was bombed by B-52 planes, a survey of the landscape showed an empty city. Houses, bridges and factories were broken. The bombing ended in vast destruction and damages. Many of the structures had become pieces of small stones.

Many big fires were burning fiercely in the big buildings. At the same time many firemen, young men and women were trying to put out the fires by using pails of water and wet cloths. From the fiery high building the screams of babies and children could be heard. Using every method possible these firemen tried to the best of their ability to take people out of the burning building. After the fire completely stopped, they removed the dead on stretchers. They put the dead on the pavement in rows and covered them with soft, white cloths. Relatives of the dead stood nearby crying in full hatred of the war which had brought them so much destruction and grief. After three hours, the firemen took the dead to the place for burying them. People in tears were finding sentimental things in their relatives' houses.

Over the whole area, the bombers had left holes about 10 metres deep and 10 metres apart on both sides of the road. There were many trees which held pieces of cast iron from the bombs on their branches and some birds landed on the branches of the trees and were singing in the extended silence.



Earthquake

MARCO SOLORZANO

When the earthquake started I lost all control of myself and thought what is happening here? The first quake stopped and suddenly another one came in its place. I was very scared. The first thing I thought about was my family and I decided to go to my house. I thought I would leave as soon as possible but the darkness prevented me from doing so. I was thinking that the quake could be harming my family or destroying my house. Finally I decided to walk to my house. While I was walking I saw a lot of ruined streets and housing. Everybody stood up across from their houses; some were crying unhappily. Everybody lamented their loss. In several cities many bodies were found under large blocks of dirt, some of them dead and others with little hope for life. Anyway, everything was brought under control with good results.

I always think that the big fish eats the smaller one. A lot of countries knew of our catastrophe and they decided to help us by sending food, clothes and mainly money. For instance the USA sent about \$10,000,000 to help meet the needs of people, but what happened was that nobody saw how the money was used. The politicians and military people gained everything.

Nobody risked protesting because of fear of being killed.

A few weeks ago I heard on the radio about a big meeting of Canadian politicians. The speech promised a better life for Canadians and everybody hurraed this announcement, but I don't believe it. Our words are taken by the wind and everybody has forgotten almost everything.

In Guatemala

MARCO SOLORZANO

In Guatemala, I lived in an area of civil war north of the capital. While I was there I was working as a teacher, twenty kilometres from my house. I had to go to work every day. In the afternoon I was back home. Every morning I used to see terrible cases. For instance, in March 1981, I saw a big truck on the road completely burned. I was scared because I didn't see anything. Nobody was there. Only the truck and a dead man, perhaps the owner. I had to continue to my school. A few kilometres ahead, I saw a bus on fire. I was therefore fearful and I decided to come back, but the people who had burned the bus stopped me at the road. They wore green clothes and they asked: Why are you returning? Are you a detective or a policeman? No, I said. Neither a detective nor a policeman, I added. I'm

a teacher. I had to come back because I saw the bus on fire and I was very scared. I told them that. One of them pointed a sophisticated gun at me which I have never seen before. Suddenly another man came toward me and ordered me to get off the motorcycle. After that he knocked me down. He felt better when he didn't find anything on me. He hoped to find a gun or a knife, but he didn't. When these guerrillas heard other motorcycles coming toward us, they told me: "You must go right away." However I was so nervous that I couldn't turn on my motorcycle. They wanted to scare the other motorcyclists, but my motorcycle problem gave warning to the others so they got back quickly. Two of them crashed into each other and they fell down. The guerrillas laughed. I was then released.

Lions in Agony

DARREL ROBINSON

Bigger things'll happen in the jungle than death to lowly creatures.
Beasts whose presences are announced by large tropical birds,
and gazelles whose flighty nerves are warned by lesser minstrels
run to safety amongst their kind.

Days without. A king in forests.
A pride of might driven through the jungle till early light.
Green eyes reach for the kill as hunger rules, and claws tear
flesh of prey: theirs to taste as the agony of emptiness is again fulfilled,
and sufficed for the predator, and...Creatures of the Night.

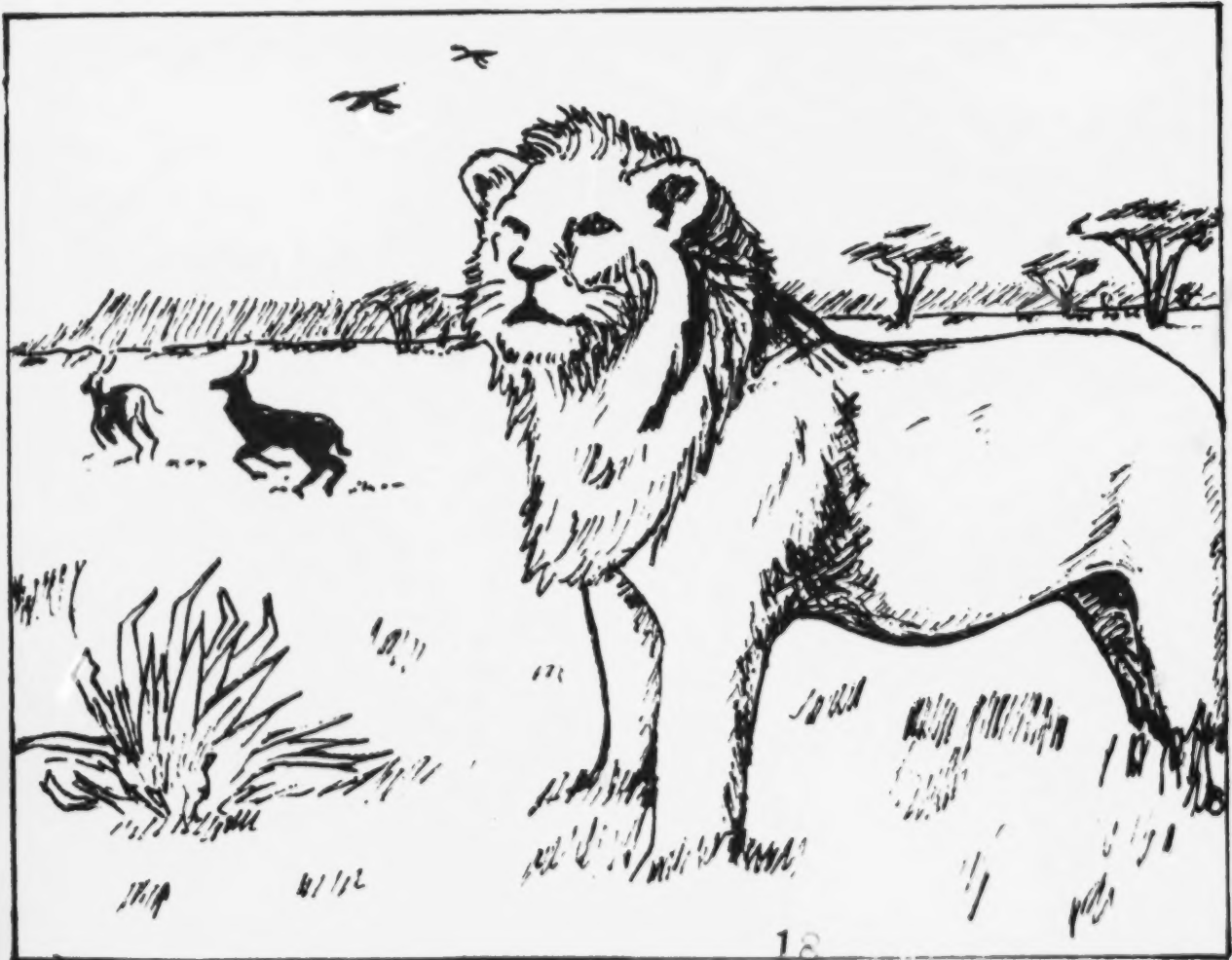


Illustration: Joanne Brown

A Stroll

WILLIAM VASQUEZ

It was night time, and I was walking to the store. Out the door, there was immediately a gloomy darkness. After a few puffs of air, I was on my way. There was the cracking of dust on the road as I stepped on it with my footwear. My legs were going up and down like a piston in an engine. I passed a certain yard, and the dog wasn't there to bark at me. The stars as usual were far away in excess of twenty trillion miles. I looked at the moon realizing that what I saw was bigger than Canada and the US together. I had vertigo. I hit Grosvenor Street. I felt happy and reassured about it, because it was a straight line all the way. I got to the store. It was a different story.

Fat Cats

LESLIE KISH

Dear Editor:

I am writing in response to Mr. L.J. Joy's letter of November 15th. He refers to union members as "fat cats" with large pay increases and juicy fringe benefits.

I guess I am one of Mr. Joy's "fat cats", but I certainly am not in any position to "sit back and purr contentedly."

I am a longshoreman, and I would like to tell you a little about my job and life.

In the morning I get up at 6 o'clock and arrive at the dispatch office at 6:45. I am dispatched to a job by 7:20, and sometimes I must drive 20-40 km to get to the job site. Once there, I work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with an hour for lunch and two ten minute coffee breaks. Most weeks I must go to the dispatch office seven mornings a week to ensure I get five days work.

Because I can never be sure of getting work five days in a row, my life is very chaotic. I cannot enjoy a normal family life because I can never plan ahead when I am unsure what days I will be working.

As a longshoreman, if I want to have a good living,

I really have to hustle. When my day job finishes, instead of taking a chance on getting a job the next day, I will try to get on the graveyard shift which is dispatched as the next day's work. If I am "lucky," I will be at work again at 1:00 a.m. for another shift which finishes at 8:00 a.m. Then I will go home to sleep until 2:00 p.m. when I must go to the dispatch again and attempt to get another graveyard shift. If a longshoreman chooses to do this, his life becomes a revolving door of eating, sleeping and working.

Hopefully, this will give Mr. Joy and those who support his point of view a better idea of what life is like for some of us "fat cats". I am not complaining about my job, I am only trying to point out that, like all jobs, mine too has its negative aspects.

Almost daily, I read something negative in the papers about this or that union or unions in general. Like any organization, there will be problems, but I am happy to be a union member. Too many people have forgotten or never learned just how much the unions have done for workers in this country, both union and non-union workers.

Lambing Day On The Farm

HEDY KRENTZ

Many years ago my husband and I were living on a homestead in Alberta. The homestead was located 85 miles west of Edmonton. It was very primitive to live there. We didn't have any electricity and we had to get water from the well. Now I would like to tell you the story of a lambing day on the farm. We had a 150 sheep; two of them were rams. It was early in spring, just a week before Easter when we were waiting for the lambs to be born. It is still very cold at that time of the year. At night the temperature went down to 20 below zero, so every morning when we got up, we went to the barn and looked to see if everything was alright. On the morning of Good Friday, the first lambs were born. At the same time it started to snow, and in no time we had a blizzard. It was very cold, especially for the little lambs. With some of the sheep, we had to help with the delivery. Many had twins, some dead, and some of the mothers didn't accept them. So we had quite a few orphans. Then we tried to match up some of the orphan lambs to the mothers whose lambs were dead. The first thing

we had to do was to unpelt the dead lambs. Then we had to wrap the pelts around the orphaned lambs, and with good luck the mothers would adopt the lambs.

The mothers knew the smell of their babies, and would not accept any other baby. It was a hard and frustrating job,

"On the morning of Good Friday, the first lambs were born."

and it lasted for a few days. The weather got a little better the next day, and it was a nice sight to look at the snow-white lambs. They were jumping and running all around us. We had two mothers who were very old and sick looking. On Easter morning one of the sick mothers died and our neighbour and my husband cut the mother open to save the lamb. She had twins, fully grown, but they were dead too. We were very sad about it, but we tried our best to save them. In the end we only had two orphan lambs left, and that was very good. By that time we were

cold and tired, but had the warmth of joy within us. In the next few days the weather got nice and warm, and the sheep went out in the meadow to graze. It was a lovely sight to look at, and we were proud that everything had gone so well. We kept the lambs until they were six months old, then we sold them. I hope everyone will enjoy this story.

Immigration to Canada

HEDY KRENTZ

Now I had told my Mom and Dad my plans, but to tell my brothers and sister was a different story. My youngest brother had started to work as an apprentice to learn brick laying. He only came home on the weekend. So I had to wait till everyone was home to tell them about my decision and that was the hardest thing to do especially telling my youngest brother. He was the closest to me and came to me with all of his problems as if I were his mother. In a way it was time because I had taken care of him since he had been a baby. On the following weekend I told them all about my plans and as I have said before, my youngest brother found it the hardest to accept. He left the house without saying anything.

I needed a sponsor to go to Canada, so I put an ad in the Canadian-German Magazine and asked if someone would sponsor me. I got over 100 replies, many of them wanted to get married, but marriage was not what I wanted. Over 80 percent of the letters had pictures of big cars, and most of the men were bragging about things that they owned.

My feelings were mixed and I could not believe that they had all those big cars, because in Germany at that time only the rich people drove cars like that. I answered three of the letters and in only two months I dropped two, the only one I kept writing back to is now my husband. He never bragged and all the things that he wrote about sounded more like life really was. Right from the beginning he wrote that he could not be my sponsor because the Government of Canada had a policy that a sponsor had to have money and responsibility to help me through for five years, or he had to marry me in about three months. Marriage was not on our minds. I still wanted to go back after two years. Then a letter came with a notice that his best friend's father had taken the responsibility and that they would be my sponsor. It was a happy day and from that day on I could see some progress to make my dreams come true. By now I had a picture of my friend and he had one of me. His family teased him about my weight and size. I was never small and I weighed around 170 pounds, but later my friend told me he always loved heavier girl friends. I had to take the train twice to drive to Bonn to the Canadian Consulate to get my immigration papers in order. A half a year went by now and my papers were finally

in my hands and I could start to think about my trip. I wrote back to my friend and told him that I needed the fare ticket because the Government wanted the fare booked and paid in Canada. Everything was going fine and it took only two more months until the day I had to leave. All that time Mom, Dad, my brothers and sister never mentioned a word about my activities. I only noticed that they were all very quiet, especially my youngest brother.

The day came quickly when I had to leave and part with all my friends and family. Nobody wanted to drive me except my cousin. They all were devastated and couldn't believe that I was leaving. When I said goodbye no words were spoken. Dad was still in shock and all the others were in tears and fearful, but all waved and wished me good luck. We drove along cities, towns and villages. I wanted to remember all the things around. The time was flying by, it only lasted a few hours and the ship was in sight. It was beautiful to see the ship floating there in the harbour, big, white, and tall, and out of the smokestack dark clouds appeared. Many people on top of the ship looked busy putting the last finishing touches on the ship to make our trip more pleasant. However, it was time to say goodbye to my cousin. The last words were: please tell my family not to worry and I will write as soon as I can.

All had boarded, a band played the last song, flags and people waved to see us off. Now the ship was moving and I went below to the cabin and found out that I had to share my room with another lady and her two children. The ages of the children were: a girl of three and a boy of five.

In a way I was happy, the children took my mind off many thoughts, and I was fond of children anyway. We were in luck because our steward was a fun-loving guy and always thoughtful of our needs. The lady and I drank a glass of wine together in the cabin just to get to know each other. I found out that she wanted to meet her husband in Regina and the funny thing about her was that she loved every man on the ship who was alone and without company of a lady. I was shocked. My bringing up in life was different so I couldn't understand what she was doing. She left her children most of the time in the cabin and took it for granted that I would baby-sit for her...

First Job

JILL KRISTOFFERSON

At the age of sixteen and after I had just passed grade ten I decided to get a job for the summer. All dressed up in my best wool suit and good shoes, I was set to take the world on. I asked my mom if she would drive me to Whalley but she shook her head: no. We had very lousy bus services, so it was walking or nothing. I walked all the way to Whalley, about six miles, to put in a couple of applications. It was a hot day for June and walking was very difficult. I was getting very tired and frustrated from the heat, walking too much, and from the turn-downs from employers. The last place I went to was Panco Poultry.

I stood outside the office door for a few minutes to get my nerves together, as I had butterflies in my stomach. I walked to the closest desk and said that I was looking for a job for the summer. A short, half bald man of 50 looked at me with cold blue eyes. He asked me one question which threw me off guard. The question was, "Are you right handed?" I said, "Yes." He then said, "You start Monday morning at 7:30 a.m."

I couldn't believe my ears. I got a job! My heart skipped a beat as I skipped out the door.

Monday morning I was up bright and early with my lunch in hand and my spirits high, to go to work. My Dad drove me that first day but he also said that I would have to make arrangements to get a ride to and from work thereafter. Through the back door I walked, proud as can be, down the hallway like everybody else to the laundry room.

There stood the man who hired me with his piercing eyes. He looked me up and down with interest, grumbling under his breath. He threw me a very starched uniform. I put the stiff uniform on, placed my lunch on the table like everybody else and followed them into the factory.

I was extremely nervous with sweaty hands and happy with heart. A huge muscular lady stopped in front of me and asked if I was the new girl. I said, "Yes," thinking that this

person must be from the army because she was built like a tank with a very authoritative voice to match. This lady's name was Lila and she was going to be my supervisor. We marched down to the end of the building where all the assembly lines were. As she handed me a hook knife I noticed how large her hands were from mine. She stepped up and pushed herself between two other ladies on the assembly line and told me to watch her as this would be what I would be doing. A quick 60 seconds went by and then she stepped down and told me to go ahead and give it a try.

So with the hook knife in hand I started to cut the breast off the chicken. Like all assembly lines everybody does one thing and only one thing and the next person is doing her thing.

I cut chicken breasts for eight long tiring hours. My legs were stiff and sore, my back ached, and my head hurt, but my arms and hands got the worst treatment of all. After eight hours we quit, at least I thought it was the end of the day and we walked into the lunchroom for a ten minute coffee break. I was sure surprised to find out it was not the end of the day. The bell went off and back to work we went for another two hours. Finally, we came to the end of the day. I was so relieved. A kind lady drove me home. I dragged my sore body to the front door.

When I stood in front of the door I reached for the knob but my hand could not go around the knob. My

hands were so swollen I had to kick at the door so someone would let me in as I couldn't knock on the door. My father opened the door and asked me how was my day. I started to cry. I cried, "I'll never go back there again." Dad said to me that I would change my mind tomorrow. I couldn't eat. All I wanted to do was go to bed. Dad creamed my hands with Deep Heat and put gloves on them. He then made up a hot medicinal drink with dark rum in it. I cried myself to sleep. Next morning Dad woke me up at 5:30 a.m. and he asked me if I was going to work. I didn't answer him, but I got up to get ready for work again. I worked at Panco for 7 years.



Photo: Sarah Leen

A Trip to Remember

ENRIQUE CARRASCO

It all started one day when I was in my house relaxing after a hard day in school.

Then the telephone rang and I answered. It was my aunt asking me for a favour. She wanted me to go with my cousin and her girl friend to Acapulco to look after them and make sure that nothing happened to them.

The idea of going for a holiday sounded very attractive to me so of course I took the offer and began to pack my suitcase. We were going to Acapulco for four days. My cousin Cristina and her friend Susana, from Spain, were very excited about the idea, and finally we left for Acapulco.

Everything went fine until the first morning when we were getting ready to go to the beach. After we had our bathing suits on, and just before we left the apartment where we were staying, I noticed some hair on Susana. It was under her arms. I certainly asked her to shave that immediately. I was not taking her to the beach where I was going to find all my friends, and let them see such a gross thing. But Susana refused to shave the hair under her arms and that began a terrible argument between her and me. She was very upset because in her country that is normal, so I told her that in this case she was in my country, and that was the most unfeminine, nasty, and gross thing that anyone could see. As the argument took place I kept imagining Susana at the beach, waving to somebody, showing that nasty, tangle of black sweaty hair under her arms. After 3 hours of continuous discussion I won the argument, and she shaved before we left for the beach.

At first I was very happy because I found many people that I knew who were on holiday at the same time that we were there, but later on I was depressed because at night when everybody would go dancing I would have to stay and look after Cristina and Susana, because they were not allowed to go dancing, and my aunt called every night at midnight to make sure that we were in the apartment.

That first day we stayed at the beach almost all the time. It was nice to lie in the sun, but it was a pain in the neck to put up with Susana who was very upset with me because I

had forced her to shave that jungle of hers. When the night arrived we went for a walk and then back to the apartment to watch television and wait for my aunt to call at 12:00. After my aunt called, we fell asleep.

The next morning we got up and went to have breakfast. I decided that since we couldn't go dancing, we would spend the money in a very fancy restaurant. So that morning I chose one of the fanciest restaurants in Acapulco, and I told Susana and Cristina to be free and eat very well. After we had



Illustration: Gerald Kelly

TRANSITIONS

LATER WRITING

completed breakfast I realized that I had left the apartment without my wallet. I had to leave them there and go and get the wallet to pay for the meal. I was not too upset until I couldn't find the keys for the apartment. I returned to the restaurant hoping that they had the keys for the apartment, but they had forgot all about the keys, and they were inside the apartment which was on the 20th floor of the building. How on earth would I get the money? I went back to the building hoping that the landlord would do me the favour of opening the apartment, but he was out and wouldn't be back until 1:00 p.m. Susana and Cristina were going to kill me since they were in that restaurant from 8:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. waiting for me to appear with the money for the bill.

When I arrived to pay and pick them up, I was surprised at what I saw. Cristina and Susana had decided that they would have some drinks. I certainly was embarrassed by them because they were so drunk that they kept falling off their chairs and everything. Their laughs were loud enough to leave you deaf, and the manager asked them to leave five times, but they were waiting for me to come with the money.

I was so upset because they were drunk, that the only thing I wanted was to go to the beach. So we left the restaurant, and went to the beach. Everything was getting worse. When I was at the beach, all my friends came to tell me what a great time they had dancing the night before. Everything that happened that day, made me have the desire to go out dancing. The disaster grew so much that I decided that that night we were going dancing.

I called a meeting between the three of us to decide how we could go dancing without letting my aunt become suspicious. We decided that we would go dancing, and that we would leave the club at 11:30 p.m. and go back to the apartment and answer the telephone, when my aunt called. After we talked to my aunt, we would go back to the club. I made Cristina and Susana promise me that they would only have one or two drinks, but no more than that.

We tried it the first night, and everything worked out perfectly. We were back in time to answer the telephone. Cristina and Susana didn't drink anything but Coca Cola. They also obeyed me all night, and we had a great time that night.

The next morning we woke up late, and we made sure that before we went for lunch we had the money and the keys. We decided to go to the same restaurant that we went to the day before for breakfast. This time it was more embarrassing than the day before because this time they didn't give us service. I don't blame them. After all the time I took, the noise and things that Cristina and Susana did, for sure they wouldn't take another chance with us. So we left that restaurant and when we went dancing that night, we would have enough money to spend there. After we had lunch, we went to the beach. This time I was very happy because I had the opportunity to tell other people that didn't go out, how much fun I had dancing. This day was not as bad as the first day of our holidays. The only thing that didn't go right was that they wouldn't give us service in that restaurant, but other than that everything went O.K.

That night we did the same. We went dancing, left the club to answer the telephone, and then we went dancing after my aunt called us. We did this the third night as well, but this time everything went wrong. We were not back in time to answer the telephone. This meant that my aunt called, and we were out, so she would be suspicious of us dancing. If that was the case, she would be completely right.

While we were in the club things were not so good because Cristina and Susana didn't obey me at all, and they



were drinking while I was dancing or in the washroom. We left the club quite late that night and everything was getting worse and worse. When we were getting back to the apartment a policeman stopped me, and usually I talked my way out very well when things like this happened. But this time I couldn't talk my way out of the problem, and Cristina, Susana, and I ended up in the police station. The policemen in Acapulco are famous for being very mean, so I was quite scared. I didn't know what they had planned for me. Also, I didn't want anything to happen to Cristina and Susana.

When we came to the police station, I realized that Cristina and Susana were safe since they were being very sweet to the policemen, but I also knew that I was not safe. First they asked me to go into an empty room that had only four walls and a door, and the walls didn't reach the ceiling. There was a space between the ceiling and the walls. Through that space I could hear Susana and Cristina talking to the policeman. Then three big guys with no suits and no trousers walked into the room where I was. I wondered what they were going to do, so I decided to ask them what was going on, but just before I finished asking them they started to punch me and hit me all over. Then I knew what was happening. I kept on jumping and holding my hands in the space between the ceiling and the end of the walls.

I would tell Cristina and Susana to go and find someone that could come and take me out. Cristina and Susana tried very hard to convince the policemen to let me out, but they didn't succeed at all. They left for the apartment right away, so they could tell some of my friends that were in Acapulco at that time.

When Cristina and Susana arrived at the apartment, they found many of my friends, and one of them told Cristina that he would call back in five minutes. Cristina was very scared, so she was crying. The telephone rang and Cristina answered while she was crying.

To add to our bad luck, her mother had decided to call to make sure that we were O.K. So when my aunt noticed that Cristina was crying, she asked what was the problem. Cristina couldn't lie to her mother and she told her everything. My aunt was very worried, so she called someone that



she knew in Acapulco, and this person was a big boss of the police department. About three hours later, my aunt's friend came to my rescue, but it was too late. By then, I could hardly move because of all the pain all over my body. My aunt's friend was so upset that he told the three men and two policeman who did this to me, to go and never come near the area if they wanted to be alive.

Much later I found out through my aunt, that her friend sent eight guys to do the same thing to the people that hit me, and apparently the eight guys really took it seriously, leaving the three guys in the hospital for months. After all, my aunt was not so upset with me for what I did concerning Cristina and Susana, and I was extremely happy to be back in Mexico City.

My Friend

SONIA BARTEK

Since my husband started his own business he spends all of his time and energy at work. When he comes home, he is very tired. He wants to only eat and watch T. V. or go to bed and sleep. All of our communication has broken down because he prefers quiet when he is at home. I try to understand him and make the best of it. I make good dinners, but he eats with little appetite. Sometimes, after dinner I ask my husband tricky questions. For example: "How did you like the spaghetti today?" He replied, "It was very delicious, Sweetheart." We had potatoes for supper.

In the beginning I accepted this kind of response with humour, but when I found out that he was going to continue working without rest I began to get nervous. I started thinking to myself. What would life be like if I didn't have a husband? Because I have only a robot. I wished to explain my feelings to someone. I thought about who would be the right person to tell of my brokenheart. I decided that the best person would be my mother-in-law. She lived very far from us in Europe and I very much wanted to explain to her what life with her son was like. I knew that she thought very highly of her son like most mothers are inclined to do. I felt that she was probably thinking how lucky I was to be married to her son. I wanted to explain my position in Canada in a very delicate way, but I also wanted to make her angry because I was very angry. I started my stupid letter like this:

Dear Mother:

How are you? What is new at home. I am sorry that we haven't written you in a long time. Your son is working all day and all night like a slave. He doesn't have any time to write. When he comes home, he is so tired that he does not recognize what he has had for supper. I have tried to change him, but I have found out that it is impossible. He is not enough life for me and I have decided to try some other arrangement.

Now I have a friend who cares for me and I no longer feel as lonely. My friend is very gentle and intelligent and he especially appreciates my attention. I wish and hope that you will understand. He loves me very much and gives me more attention than my husband. We are going together to the park or the forest. Without my friend I would be afraid to go. Your son found out about our friendship recently. Now, he is jealous. Before this happened my friend was a friend to both of us, but not anymore. One day for some small reason my husband took a two by four and chased after my friend. My friend ran to me for safety. I gave him a hug and said to my husband, "If you want to spank him, spank me too." He didn't come after either of us. After this, there is a big difference between my husband and my friend.

I enjoy watching my friend eat. He has such a good appetite. For me, it is a great satisfaction to know that he loves my kitchen. That's about it for our life. And, what do I mind about this letter? Nothing. Don't be worried. I don't want to change anything in my life. My husband will be staying at his position and my friend will continue being my friend. He is not working, my friend is younger than me and not of my race. He is black and much too hairy. I am thinking beyond this day. I know that it is not possible to live on love alone regardless of one's feelings of the heart; money is also a part of life. The fact is that my friend is a dog. His name is Adar and he is a German Shepherd.

Sonia Bartek.

IN MY PAST

S. B.

In my past:
I was free with the knowledge of
how to use my language. I was not
free to write everything that was in
my mind.

In my present:
I am free to write everything
that is in my mind, but I am
not free in using English.

In my own language I can fly.
In English I hardly
crawl in my writing.

Sometimes I feel like a fish
which at any moment will drown.

I just wish to learn how to swim
or fly in English, also.

WORK

NOTES

I LIKE THE WORD

“WITH”

ABE HAMM

My name is Abe Hamm. I was born in Saskatchewan, and I lived there for many years. I spent most of my working time farming. Last June I moved to Surrey with my sister. I am no longer on the farm.

For many years I lived with my brother, Jake, and worked on his farm. His farm was only about 80 acres. He had a few cattle but did not do any grain farming. I helped out with the cattle, and I enjoyed the work.

I was working earlier today. Now I am at school. I like the word “with.” I enjoy working with words. Today I have learned words like: only, did, in, that, was, getting, start, and much more. I work so hard I deserve much credit!

In this piece Abe Hamm conveys a sense of excitement and intimacy about something as common as a function word — “with.” He also links different ideas of what “working” means. Abe mentions working earlier in the day, then recognizes that writing is another kind of work he does.

LAWRENCE

ALMA NEWMAN

Lawrence, my sweet love, fulfilled the command, “Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved us.” Your loving kindness toward me was so constant and true. Oh, how great is my loss. My Dearest Lawrence you ran the Christian race diligently and steadfastly. I now congratulate your Glorious Victory. You have passed with Honors.

Reflective and biblical in tone, “Lawrence” expresses profound love; and, although excerpted from a long prose passage, it can be read as a poem.

NEW LINE OF WORK

HARRY BUTTERFIELD

My name is Harry Butterfield, and I have worked 32 years at L & K Lumber. Recently L & K was forced to shut down their operation in North Vancouver leaving me to find employment in a different field because I am too old to start at the bottom in another sawmill. I was thinking of going into security work, but I found that there was a lot of report writing, so I decided to take a writing course. Then maybe, just maybe, I would be able to get by.

In this selection Harry uses some common idiomatic expressions, which is to say, he uses those common expressions that are always waiting on the tip of the tongue ready to jump into conversation. These expressions, like spices used in cooking, are the flavour of our language.

This piece shows that a writer can write as he speaks if he is honest and knows what he is talking about. It seems I can write about writing "till the cows come home" or until I have "bored you to death."

"New Line of Work" is a simply told story expressed as a simple telling of fact until the writer arrives at his last two sentences. Something happened in the writer's life. This something is the loss of work at the sawmill. The loss has created a new need for the writer: one of finding work. In the beginning of the last sentence, the writer's tone is tentative but hopeful. Sometimes it is easier to think of the tone of a piece of writing as the writer's attitude toward his subject, his audience, or himself. This might be better understood in the form of an idiom: "don't use that tone of voice with me," or "tone it down."

Most listeners have little difficulty understanding these expressions. Likewise, the reader must feel the writer's tone or he will fail to get the meaning of the writing.

SPARE TIRE

HARRY BUTTERFIELD

The best way to make ends meet in this world is to always have a spare. In other words, look ahead. When you drive a car you wouldn't think of going anywhere without a spare tire. The same thing applies in life. When you are working and get your cheque, put so much away in the bank. I didn't do this because I thought I had it made with 32 years seniority. The owner told me I would be working there until I retired. So never leave anything to chance. That's what I would tell all the young people starting out today, to always have a spare tire because the whole world could come down on you. Then you wake up one morning and you're old, no job, no money, no education. No one wants you. Your pride is gone and you have to take scraps from the welfare. It would be a good idea, when you're young and have a job but no education, to go to night school because you'll never know when you will need it. A spare tire.

In "Spare Tire" Harry is someone we know. He simply writes about what is on his mind. It could be said that he is "saying his piece," or "speaking his mind." We often use one or another of these expressions to describe people who speak "straight from the shoulder," or "shoot from the hip."

If our writing vocabulary is small, if we are hesitant to use words which we have trouble spelling, or, if we find it difficult to move from one thought to another in our early writing efforts, then these idiomatic expressions or common sayings can help us to describe our world and our feelings. Once we gain more vocabulary, become more sure of our spelling, and begin to see how our thoughts are connected, we rely less and less on these expressions in our writing and speech.

BAD DREAM

By HONG NGO

I had a bad dream last night. Actually, it was a nightmare, not a bad dream. It made me feel sick today. I stayed up too late to study; consequently, I overslept in the morning. My mother-in-law's voice from downstairs woke me up. I almost cried because I didn't know how to answer why I got up too late. The alarm woke me up once again. I was really scared. I thought that I was still living with them. When I turned around I saw my sister asleep on the bed next to mine; I realized it was just a dream. I left that family almost seven years ago; but the terror still often scares me. I'd rather die than live with them. I ask myself if I am crazy. No one can force me to do anything I don't want to. Six years living with them influenced the rest of my life. I wish that I wouldn't remember anything of my past with them.



The search within oneself for the meaning of experience continues in "Bad Dream." The first sentence is a powerful statement in its simplicity. However, as we read, we discover what the writer has already found: that a bad dream is better expressed as a nightmare. These two sentences show the reader that the writer is consciously aware of meaning in words; that she has a critical eye toward her own writing; and, that she wants the reader to find the same meaning as she found in the experience.

IN RETROSPECT

HONG NGO

In retrospect, I can see how much my writing has changed. When I started to write in the literacy room I had a lot of mistakes: my spelling was wrong, my punctuation was awful. I couldn't express how I felt, and I put the words in wrong positions. I felt nervous and excited every time I gave a piece of my work to the teachers for correction. However, I've learned from my mistakes.

Time goes by: my writing comes along as well. To me, writing is wonderful. Writing is the most important thing in my life. I write from the bottom of my heart or I choose not to write, also from the bottom of my heart. Sometimes I just need to keep things to myself. However, when I write, every sentence is really important; I'd like people who read my writing to see the real me.

One of my teachers says that I'm an introspective writer.



In "In Retrospect" the writer's tone of voice expresses satisfaction with the past as she looks back over her writing.

We see that the writer has the desire, the need and the courage to develop the language skills to understand her experiences and that this understanding is strengthened by looking back at earlier work.

ON WRITING

HONG NGO

To me writing is wonderful. It expresses all of my feelings. I love writing. I think writing is not always easy; I often get stuck on it, and it makes me feel angry. I love writing and to me writing is wonderful. It expresses all of my feelings; however, I often feel angry when I get stuck on my writing or I don't have enough English vocabulary to describe precisely what I feel. It's easy to write to describe a building, a car, a table, etc., but it's difficult to indicate your feelings.

I can see myself in my writing. The mirror only helps you to decorate yourself to look good, to look more beautiful, and to look more attractive. You cannot see inside when you look at yourself in the mirror.

I find that I cannot write whenever I want. I sometimes sit down almost an hour, but I cannot write anything, even a sentence or if I can write it is only an unclear and unstructured paragraph. However, I usually do my writing on the street. While driving a car, I suddenly think about something and I immediately desire to write it down; therefore, I stop the car, find the right place to park and write. I feel wonderful after arriving home and I read again what I have written.

In "On Writing" the writer is trying to control the language. The first sentence joyfully expresses what the writer feels about writing. In the sentences that follow the writer reviews what she has written. Dissatisfied with the organization of words, or syntax, in her first sentences, the writer rearranges her words into new patterns. The new sentences show that the writer has added words, taken words away, and exchanged one word for another. She is controlling her language. And, in controlling language, the writer is looking to language to help her understand her experience.

The writer develops the second paragraph. Then the third. And it is over. But is it? In the final sentence the author of "On Writing" discovers that writing does not end with the writing.

AIR RAID

HEDY KRENZ

I was born in a small village in Germany. It was surrounded by lots of farm land, bushes and timber. Every family had a vegetable garden, and the houses were surrounded by lots of colorful flowers. The village only had three main roads coming in and out, and all the other streets were made out of bricks and very narrow. Every house was made out of bricks and had red clay shingles, and with all the flowers and trees around, the village looked quite beautiful.

It was war time, and I was about ten years old, when an English fighter plane got shot down on the village edge. It was late in fall and every day we had air raids many times a day. Every time the sirens sounded we ran to the dugout to hide till the danger was over, and the planes disappeared. Many times the planes came down so low that we could see the pilot in the cockpit. It was very loud, and many children cried, and they were holding their hands over their ears when the bombs came down. Many times the air raids lasted half an hour and one shock wave after another came, and from the ground we could hear the big artillery guns firing in the sky in hope of getting a plane down. When the air raids were over, the sirens were sounding the off alarm so the people knew it was over, but it took quite awhile to get the noise out of your ears and to calm down.

One day in late fall everything was very quiet, and it seemed that all was well, when late in the afternoon another big air raid came. It lasted very long, and then we saw a plane coming down like a fireball and a cloud of smoke trailing behind it. Then all of a sudden everything was quiet and in no time we knew where the plane came down. Almost everyone went running to see what happened. We were about eight children, and everyone was running as fast as we could. In my mind I had no idea what an English soldier

would look like. All that I could think was that he would be different and mean, but he didn't turn out that way. In no time we were there and the village soldiers had the pilot already handcuffed. He was a very tall man, dressed in camouflage and didn't look any different than our parents. I think we children were all in shock and could not figure out why the soldier looked the same as us. Until now I did not know why, maybe because we never had contact with other people, and the propaganda told us they were all bad people. I didn't really know what to think. They took the pilot to the nearby tavern for questioning. We children were standing in front of him, and we were staring and staring and staring at him. After a little while he even smiled at us, and we felt much better and weren't afraid anymore. I don't know how long it lasted until the army police came and took him away in a truck. Then we all ran to the plane to look at it because it was the first time that we saw an airplane.

It was an exciting day, and when I came home that night, I asked my mom why people fight. She didn't know the answer and I never could figure out why, because their soldiers looked the same as ours. My only hope is that we will never have a war again. I think most of the people didn't want to fight, it just comes from the government because they always want more and more.

"The teachers told me to start writing about my life. I first wrote about my childhood because it was the easiest."

Hedy first came to the literacy program one and a half years ago. She couldn't write in English. She wanted to leave something of her life to her children.

This piece reflects the simple and honest voice of the writer. The direct voice of a child trying to make sense of the terror that was once a peaceful countryside; a child seeing the enemy for the first time.

Both accounts of "White Stallion" demonstrate work by a beginning writer. After you have read both, go back and read them again. During this reading, look at the differences between the two versions. By doing this you will be sharing in the writing process.

WHITE STALLION (FIRST DRAFT)

JO-ANN
BONNETEAU

My story is about a little girl named LeeAnne. She is 13 years old, and has blonde hair and blue eyes: a pretty girl.

LeeAnne asked her Dad if she could get a horse. He asked, "What for when you already have a goldfish, a rabbit, dog and cat?" But LeeAnne was able to talk her Dad into it.

So they went out looking for the best kind of horse they knew how. After going through 30 horses, LeeAnne now has a beautiful horse to look after. One thing that LeeAnne must do is look after the horse. Her Dad said to her, "One mistreated moment or one day missed and the horse will be mine." LeeAnne is lucky that her parents try to fulfill her dreams. What they are trying to show her is responsibility. What life is about. Meanwhile she is enjoying her horse and her other animals. As parents we are hoping that she learns from this experience, so she doesn't hang around on the street. So far, so good.

WHITE STALLION (SECOND DRAFT)

My story is about a little girl named LeeAnne. She is 13 years old, with blonde hair and blue eyes, a pretty girl. I have known LeeAnne since she was 6 years old. Now that LeeAnne is a teenager, she is more aware of the fashions in hair design and clothes. Since I am a hairstylist, LeeAnne's mom phones me from time to time to ask if I could come over to their house, to give a perm to LeeAnne.

Once I arrive at the house, the neatest stories are told to me. One thing that has happened is that LeeAnne now owns a white stallion. At the time LeeAnne was very persistent with her Dad.

The Dad questioned her at first and asked "Why would you want a horse when you have a goldfish out in the pond, two dogs, a rabbit and a cat?" Well, they proceeded to tell me the story of how they went out shopping for this stunning white stallion. They knew how. After going through 30 horses, she fell in love with this one special stallion. This horse was well bred. His back was nice and straight, and his stride was even.

The father then turned to look at LeeAnne and said, "You know what responsibilities there are to look after a horse and one thing to remember, is that if I find you mistreating or one day not feeding the horse, I will be the owner of this lovely horse."

As I was listening to the story, I said to myself, "LeeAnne is a lucky girl, to have parents that try to fulfill her dreams." But on the other hand they are showing her the responsibilities of life. Meanwhile she is enjoying the horse and other animals.

This should keep LeeAnne from hanging around shopping centres and off the streets. It is so hard for kids at that age to understand what they want out of life. I find they tell me they are bored, then the next thing they are hanging around in places where they shouldn't be. But with LeeAnne, so far, so good.

A LOOK AT JO-ANN'S WHITE STALLIONS

Fundamental to the writer is the question, "Why am I writing what I'm writing?" In *White Stallion 1*, Jo-Ann outlined a story about a little girl, the girl's father, and a stallion. Then the writer studied her work, possibly reading it aloud. She responded to her analysis by writing *White Stallion 2*.

This act of reading one's writing is a central skill which must be learned by all writers who want to become independent of the teacher, and who want to achieve maximum satisfaction from their writing.

Studying what she had already written prompted the second draft of *White Stallion*. To better understand and express what she wanted to say, Jo-Ann felt a need to rewrite *White Stallion*. Jo-Ann's interest in her work was the motivation which created a better crafted piece of writing. A quick review or second look at *White Stallion 1* and *White Stallion 2* gives the reader a chance to compare the amount of information provided by the writer for the reader.

A beginning reader might ask:

- Who is the writer?
- Which Stallion story gives us the writer's identity?
- Do we learn more about Lee Anne in story 1 or story 2?
- What does the reader learn about the White Stallion in the second story that wasn't told in the first?
- How is the final paragraph of *White Stallion 2* more clear and complete than the last 6 lines of *White Stallion 1*?

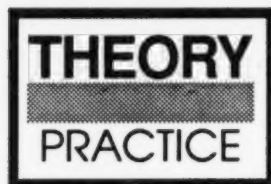
You as a beginning reader will learn to ask your own questions, and with time you will be able to provide your own answers. The questions asked here are only examples of the kinds of questions readers and writers must ask.

OTHER QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

Questions about a piece of writing often generate more questions. Further readings reveal information passed over during the first reading. Writers, like readers, must read and write their work as many times as necessary to get their meaning exactly right. If the meaning is not clear to the writer, it will not be clear to the reader.

In the second story, the reader discovers that the writer enjoys the company of the little girl and her family; learns what the writer feels about how the father teaches responsibility; realizes that the writer tells quite a bit about her own likes and dislikes; and, finally understands that the *White Stallion* stories tell as much about the writer as they do about the horse, the father and the little girl.

We started this discussion about the two *White Stallions* by saying writers must ask, "Why am I writing what I'm writing?" We can finish our discussion by saying that writers write for self-expression and do this by putting their thoughts and experiences into forms the reader can understand.



THE INVERGARRY APPROACH

LEE WEINSTEIN

Unique describes the Adult Literacy Program of Surrey—unique because of the program, the building in which it is housed, and the support of the Surrey School Board which operates the literacy program free of charge.

Two years ago the Surrey School Board renovated an elementary school and opened the Invergarry Learning Centre with 5 adult programs, including literacy.

The philosophy of Surrey's Adult Literacy program is based on our belief that adults are competent people who perform complicated everyday tasks with success and confidence. As literacy teachers we can assist these people in bringing their voices and skills to pen and page. We can best do this by creating an atmosphere where learner goals can be realized.

All facets of the student's experience in the program are self-directed, in dialogue with teachers. To facilitate this, we have tried to develop a learner directed program. This process begins with our working definition of an illiterate, who is anyone having difficulty with reading or writing. This is in strong contrast to traditional Adult Basic Education programs and philosophies.

These traditional ABE programs give students formal assessment tests, and if the results are low enough, students are then directed into literacy classes. This appears to give the message that "if you fail you can enroll."

We feel that if students decide they need our services, it is reason enough for their attending. Why else would anyone confess a problem with reading and writing to someone they've never met before?

Because of our broad definition of this problem, as well as an open admissions policy, the program enrolls students with widely varied skill levels. Some are not alphabet ready, others can read fluently, but cannot write to their own satisfaction, and the rest, constituting the majority, are somewhere in between.

This mixture of students is a positive step to creating self-confidence for our learners. Adults generally feel embarrassed and isolated with their reading and writing problems, and see everyone around them as successful. When they look at others working in class, their own stereotypes about illiterates change. It's essential they see the program not as a ghetto, but as a community of people with all the varieties that exist in any community.

Learners need to see our program as a haven from failure and embarrassment; they need to read and write based on their competencies and successes rather than their perceived inadequacies.

The learner's experience in the program begins with an informal self-assessment. The learner meets with a designated teacher. The resulting dialogue attempts to establish what the students want to learn, what they see as their difficulties, and what can be suggested to accomplish their goals. Their everyday lives and interests

form the basis for the program curriculum. If the literature written about student-centred curriculum is to be taken seriously, it's hard to imagine proceeding differently.

The major obstacle to helping students is the students' own sense of failure. This perception has been effectively communicated to them throughout their previous school lives.

No matter how capable they are as individuals, they enter a school remembering themselves as failures academically. Passing through those schoolhouse doors sets up a reverse alchemy.

Therefore, the notion of the students' self assessments with graded materials is an essential first step if the program is to effectively help learners become independent.

After the assessment and conference with a staff member, the students start where their skills and interests lie. For those adults who feel comfortable with print, a number of options are open.

They are encouraged to choose a book from among our 3000 titles in the library. Because many students have never read a book before, they are assisted in that selection. Together, staff and students preview choices to find a book that possesses both readability and interest.

In-class time is spent reading the book selection, discussing student work, or writing.

In this way students come to see their learning as an independent, though guided process.

Above all, we don't teach reading and writing skills in isolation. Rules of language usage should only be taught as needed by the student.

This can best be illustrated by example. Recently we saw a student who had her work stolen by a "friend" who was living at her home. The student is a wood worker who builds and paints wooden puzzles and toys.

She was extremely upset and decided to write a letter to the person to get her belongings returned. One morning she brought the letter in because she was dissatisfied with what she had written.

After discussing it with a teacher, she sat down to revise. After 4 or 5 hours and a half a dozen drafts (and conferences with three teachers) she had what the teachers agreed was a good letter. However, the student

was still not happy and took it home for another reworking. The next morning she returned with a letter she felt good about. This letter was typed by the program's secretary.

What did this student learn? She learned grammar, in so far as it was needed to get the job done; she learned that in order to write anything purposeful, revision is necessary; she also learned the subtleties of language, in that her message had not changed, but the tone of her work was altered to more effectively make her point. She accomplished all this simply by being confident and trusting enough to seek assistance. Unfortunately, despite all this learning, the stolen items have not been returned.

Our experience in literacy has been that the process of the learners' discovery of their voices as writers is the most dramatic step toward becoming literate.

In recognition of this we offer creative writing classes for our literacy students. At any time and any skill level they can attend these sessions. The only requirement is that students be attentive and constructive with their remarks in class.

"And writing, more than anything else, gives voice to their past, present, and future."

The classes are modeled after university writing workshops. Everyone in class, from instructor to student, is encouraged and expected, but not required, to write. Students arrive early and photocopy their work. The writing is read in class and discussed for its strengths and weaknesses. Rules of language are taught within this context.

Portions of classes are devoted to discussing poetry or different aspects of the writing process. Literature is also brought in for oral readings.

The quality of writing from these classes and the rest of the literacy program shows that adult students want to take writing seriously. And writing, more than anything else, gives voice to their past, present and future.

As a result of funding through Canada Employment and Immigration Centre grants, we are able to publish this magazine as a forum for these new works. And, because important work in writing and literacy is going on across North America we hope *Voices* will be a vehicle for other programs as well. Lack of resources has forced many successful programs to work in isolation. Perhaps this effort can be a way for us to share with each other what we're doing.

CONTRIBUTORS

NICOLINA AMATO I'm from Italy and have been in Canada for over 30 years. I could speak English but I came to school to finally learn to write in English. I love to write because I am able to express things I wouldn't share with anybody except God. I put everything in my writing: the feelings, the pain, everything like that. I always feel better.

ANNA ARMIT For the first time in my life, I am not ashamed to write to my family. It's a wonderful feeling. Before I came to Invergarry Learning Centre, I was not able to write or spell. But in the last four months, since I have been coming to school, my writing and spelling have improved.

MERILYN BAILEY I come to the writing class because someone has to be the "pest," so I naturally volunteered.

SONIA BARTEK I am originally from Czechoslovakia. I came to Canada as an adult, without a knowledge of one word of English. Back in my old country I enjoyed writing very much. I thought that in Canada I would never write again, because I hardly knew how to communicate; not to read or even write. One day my friend invited me to visit the literacy classes at Invergarry Learning Centre, which she attended two times a week. Now with professional teachers I am learning to write in the English language, and I am enjoying it.

RAY BERNARD Ray is a roofer who came to Invergarry to learn reading and writing and succeeded.

JO-ANNE BONNETEAU I'm 33 years old now and started classes at the school about six months ago. It doesn't matter how old you are to go back to school. Verbally, I was good; but when it came to writing things down, I had problems with spelling and had to stop and search for a simpler word I knew how to spell. Now I force myself to use the dictionary and thesaurus. I work in sales, so I have to write memos and business letters. Now I have better self-confidence at work and in other things, too.

ROBIN BURWASH Invergarry is in a very pleasant setting and pleasant people got me over the

hump. The trees and grass put me at ease almost as much as the teachers did. The course is at an adult pace...your own. That worked for me. Reading is fun and writing is just like a sport, a great release.

HARRY BUTTERFIELD Losing my job brought me the opportunity to learn to read and write. This prepared me for my new job. Although, in my new job, the money's not as big, I have greater personal satisfaction because I am using my reading and writing skills.

ENRIQUE CARRASCO I would encourage anyone who has reached the stage as an adult where they want to read and write well to give themselves a chance.

ROSA CISZEK I came to Invergarry two years ago to improve my English. I soon discovered this small school to be not only a place where you come to learn, but also a place and someone to run to when you are sad, lonely and emotionally hurt. I met many wonderful people among students and teachers. Some of them became best friends, who I love more than the word "love" can say.

LINDA DOERKSEN I really enjoy writing and having people read what I have written. My writing makes me feel so warm and wonderful inside. I sure hope other people will write stories or poems. The writing will help them come alive, because they have so much to give also.

HAROLD "BUD" GAUNT When I started at Invergarry School about two years ago, I had a bad inferiority complex. Now, I've become more of an extrovert. Now I can do more things by myself and I feel better about it.

RON GODDARD The classes did help me. I didn't like going to banks or writing cheques because of my spelling. Now, I'm able to do that. If you want to learn, you will. If you don't want to, you won't.

ABE HAMM Day after day, Abe delivered his flyers. One day, he decided to fly. He flew. For what? For with? With four. With her is he. Wither is he?

DUNCAN HARPUR Recently I read my first book. I also read and liked "Mr. Ford" by Truman Capote. I am learning to write. Writing is easier for me when I write about something I like. I believe your mind can learn anything you want it to.

HIEP HOANG Hiep is from Viet Nam. He has been attending Invergarry Learning Centre this past year. Hiep enjoys writing essays for his Senior Secondary English course.

LESLIE KISH I used to go to another school where they teach 35 to 50 people at once. The teacher was very nice, but she dealt mainly with the slower students and had no time for us. At Invergarry, you're more or less by yourself. If you need help you can get it. The teachers cruise around and if you have any questions they always have time. Because you work by yourself, you can be at any level and you can be private about your learning.

HEDDY KRENTZ Reading and writing gave me more freedom. In speaking with people, I feel more confident. When people put legal forms in front of me, I can understand them. When you know that people have the same problems as you, you don't feel so scared.

JILL KRISTOFFERSON I felt that everybody was superior over me. I felt that I was a dumb idiot because they had diplomas and I didn't. But now I feel that I can write as well as a grad student. And if I can do it, you can do it!

MARK MCCUE The four years I have been associated with this adult literacy program have been exciting and rewarding. I have learned much and, I believe, have developed as a teacher because of this opportunity to work with adults who are strongly committed to change in their lives. Each day brings its opportunities and challenges. Hopefully, we will continue to enjoy, learn and develop in this ever-changing environment.

ALMA NEWMAN As a 53 year old grandmother, school has been very special to me. When my husband died, I asked God that I could learn to laugh again. Sometimes when I have been down I went to school and we had good times; much encouragement, lots of love from all the teachers and students and lots of laughs.

HONG NGO I come from Vietnam and I have been living in Canada for nine years. For the first four years, I couldn't attend school. Then I attended an E.S.L. class twice a week in the evening and worked during the day as a seamstress. I've felt more power inside me every single day since attending school to learn English. With my growing education, I decided to return to school full-time to continue my

education and expand my knowledge. I'd like to become a writer. I don't dream of becoming a famous person. I just want to write for myself and for people who I love; especially to see how I am changing and growing up to be the real me.

GARY PHARNESS Literacy instruction, to me, embraces all possibilities between teacher and student in the context of co-learning.

DARREL ROBINSON Coming up with something to write for the classes was a breeze. I only had to sit down with my pen and imagination and put my creativity on paper.

RUTH Ruth is not my real name. I don't want my real name used in the magazine because I can't let my co-workers know that, until recently, I couldn't read. Coming to the school is like going to an AA meeting. It's the only place where you can be honest about your reading problem.

ARTHUR SIEMENS Arthur came into the program to improve his reading and writing skills to enter a training program.

MARCO SOLORZANO I am from Guatemala, Central America. In 1982, I arrived in Vancouver. I left my country because of the political problems there. I was an elementary teacher and worked for fifteen years in many schools. Being a teacher, I was involved with social groups, like parents' groups. I used to live in a city declared as a civil war zone. I didn't like that. For this reason, I came to Canada looking for peace and to try to make a new life. I started to learn a new culture, new language and new customs. It hasn't been easy, but I'm succeeding. I encourage all those who are new in Canada to have hope for their future in this country.

LEE WEINSTEIN I have never worked for a program where I have had such a good time and been paid for it. I love reading and writing, so it's easy to be hooked by students who want so badly to learn.

JEAN WRIGHT I come here because I need to get grade 12. You have to have a goal to work towards. My goal is to become an RN. I want to go to university and do a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. People should not be ashamed to go to school. I think it's very important to read and write. I don't know how some people survive without it.



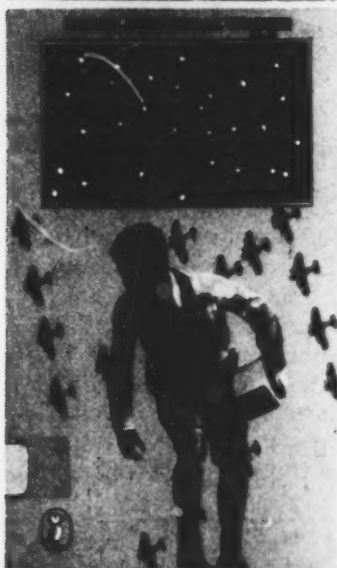
REVIEWS

WAR ZONE

LARRY WEINBERG

I think people should read War Zone if they like war stories like Platoon or Full Metal Jacket. War Zone is based on a feud between two hillbilly families who hate one another, and if you like action and suspense, you will like this book.

—Rory Chapotelle.

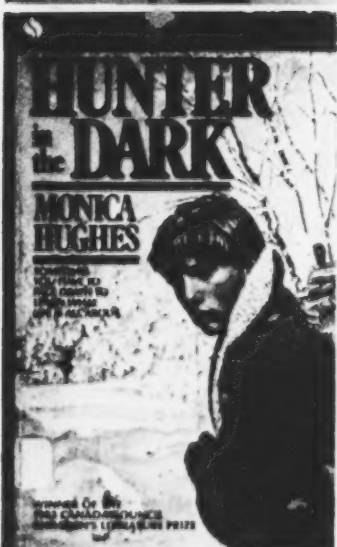


THE MACHINE GUNNERS

Robert Westall

I recommend The Machine Gunners because it is a true story about how some boys found a German bomber and the trouble they got into with the police and the Airforce. If you are interested in learning more about life in England during World War Two you will enjoy this book.

—Harold "Bud" Gaunt.



HUNTER IN THE DARK

By Monica Hughes

It's a book that captured my attention immediately. It has so much feeling, sadness, happiness, warmth, and love. It helped me to understand more about life and death. It would inspire anyone to choose a positive attitude towards life. I really didn't want to put the book down.

—Linda Doerksen.

Acknowledgements

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\$3.00

Voices

New Writers for New Readers

Volume 1 Number 2

Winter 1989



HONG NGO

To me, writing is
wonderful. Writing is
the most important
thing in my life.

I write from the
bottom of my heart or
I choose not to write,
also from the bottom
of my heart.

— HONG NGO

Cover photo of Hong Ngo by Ann E. Yow.

FORWARD

ABOUT THIS

MAGAZINE

This issue of *Voices* marks an important step in the development of the magazine as a vehicle for English language literacy programs. Response from around North America to our first issue has been over-whelmingly positive. The message is that there is no other publication quite like *Voices*.

Voices will only achieve its intended place in literacy centres if students and tutors feel this magazine represents them in a way which commercial publications cannot. Therefore, we enthusiastically call for submissions from students in all literacy programs where *Voices* is being used. More about submissions later.

Our belief is that literacy is an act of personal expression with deep significance to the student. Meaningful material cannot be invented by educational publishing houses.

The philosophy behind *Voices* is that reading and writing cannot be learned sequentially. Commercial publications view reading and writing as a "how to" process of skill acquisition, and organize their content in lock-step order.

This dominant notion of how reading occurs contrasts sharply with our editors' instructional experiences in literacy. Students are not empty vessels to be filled with sub-skills in Leggo block fashion. According to this theory, at some point when enough blocks are attached, a reader is born. Adults may indeed become readers in spite of that method but not because of it. To follow through with the sequential approach means the learners are harnessed to the material, instructional goals are secondary to learners' needs, and instructors are subordinated.

The sequential approach does not embrace the learner's uniqueness. It does not recognize the wide range of interests, experiences and hopes of individual learners. Struggling readers are seen only as empty vessels to be filled with the skills that can make them readers. This methodology robs the learning environment of its greatest potential—the active participation of the learner.

Reading materials created by writers who are isolated from learners, who have little or no interest in the lives that learners bring into the acquisition of sub-skills, have no value in the learner-centred literacy curriculum (program).

In fact, the shortcomings of most, if not all commercially published materials, make it important to ask why they are used in the first place, especially, in light of the results of a three year study by Jeanne Chall entitled, "Learning to Read: The Great Debate." In her report, Ms. Chall concluded that the most widely used materials are the product of convention and market demand, and not carefully developed along research findings.

Again, this whole approach contrasts sharply with what happens in an instructional environment which first enquires about student needs and only those means which directly help the learner to attain instructional goals.

Adult learners are thoughtful and committed people who need to be made more confident in the application of their world view to the printed page. When meaning or "relevant" themes are defined for the learner in commercial publications, she/he can only be a passive participant in the learning process.

It is within this context that *Voices* is important to the instructor as well as the student. Unlike commercial publications which claim to create relevant, adult theme-based materials, *Voices* is relevant adult material created by and for learning peers. All this really means is that, whereas in commercial publications the editor assigns purposefulness to the material, in *Voices*, the purpose is organically-generated from within the writer's search for meaning. This reversal of roles: editor-for-student to student-for-student promotes literacy as a product owned by the student and transmitted to other students. In purpose this is quite removed from being a publisher's product transmitted to an instructor who in turn attempts to transmit it to the student.

More importantly, these commercially produced materials often fail to recognize that *learning* to read and write, and *wanting to learn* to read and write are two different things. From our experience, the moti-

**"Adult learners
are thoughtful
and committed
people."**

(continued over...)

Voices

New Writers for New Readers

Volume 1, Number 2 Winter 1989



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The policy of *Voices* is to keep intact the original manuscript style of works by new writers.

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Dreams, Hopes... p. 40

(Forward continued...)

vation that enables a student to get to the program in the first place, and the knowledge she/he brings to the writing tablet or printed page, must be recognized. Literacy is, indeed, a process where the adult finds and creates personal meaning in print. This meaning is found because the adult learns through a personal commitment and not through attempts to please teachers or to pass a course.

A result of our commitment to learners' writing is that *Voices* presents itself as deserving a special place in learning environments where reading and writing are valued activities.

A Few Words About Submissions

Material submitted to *Voices* must be student work which truly

represents the student's writing effort. The student should make all corrections and revisions to manuscripts, or if instructors are involved, their input should be only in consultation with the student.

Voices also accepts submissions from instructors or administrators for the Theory/*Practice* section, a forum for sharing experiences, ideas and views of literacy/A.B.E. workers in the field.

All submissions must include a self-addressed envelope and sufficient postage (Canadian postage or International Reply Coupons) to ensure return of the manuscript ■

NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS

Bay Fishing

ARCHIE JOE

I sure miss beach seining at the Washington Reservation called Tullalup in Marysville. It takes eight people to go beach seining. One person tows the net and one mans a skiff that is at one end of the net. Two people are needed to work on the bull winches for both ends of the net. Four people have to pull in the net when it's time to pull in our nets. When we know it's time to pull in the net is when we see fish jumping in the net, or when we see our corks getting pulled under water. When it's time to pull in our net, two people pull on the cork line and two people pull on the lead line and sometimes two people pull on the webb in between the cork and the lead line. We catch Coho, Humpies, Spring, Jacks, King Salmon and Dog Salmon.



Illustration: Elena Underhill

Learning How

BERNIE VAN KEULEN

This morning I worked on the farm. My first job is to clean out the calf barn. I get up early in the morning and start work. After I clean the stalls I put clean hay in them. I do this every day and I enjoy my work very much.

We are building a new workshop at our farm. The old workshop is too old to use any more. The new workshop has a new office for my dad. I guess the old workshop will have to be torn down.

I went to a dance on Friday night with my cooking teacher, Penny. We went to the Tropic Isle restaurant. We got there about 6:30 pm. and ate dinner. We had Chinese food for dinner, and it was very good. After dinner we had a few dances. We danced so much that I was exhausted when I got home. I really had a good time.

I cooked my TV dinner in the stove on Saturday. I burned my TV dinner. I cooked rice in the stove today. I also cooked shake n' bake chicken tonight. On Wednesday we cooked pork chops and rice.

I have had a cooking teacher for two years. The teacher would come to my house and show me how to make a meal. Sometimes we would go to Safeway and the teacher would show me how to shop. After two years I graduated from cooking class. Now I can shop and cook on my own. I am learning how to do more and more things.

NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS

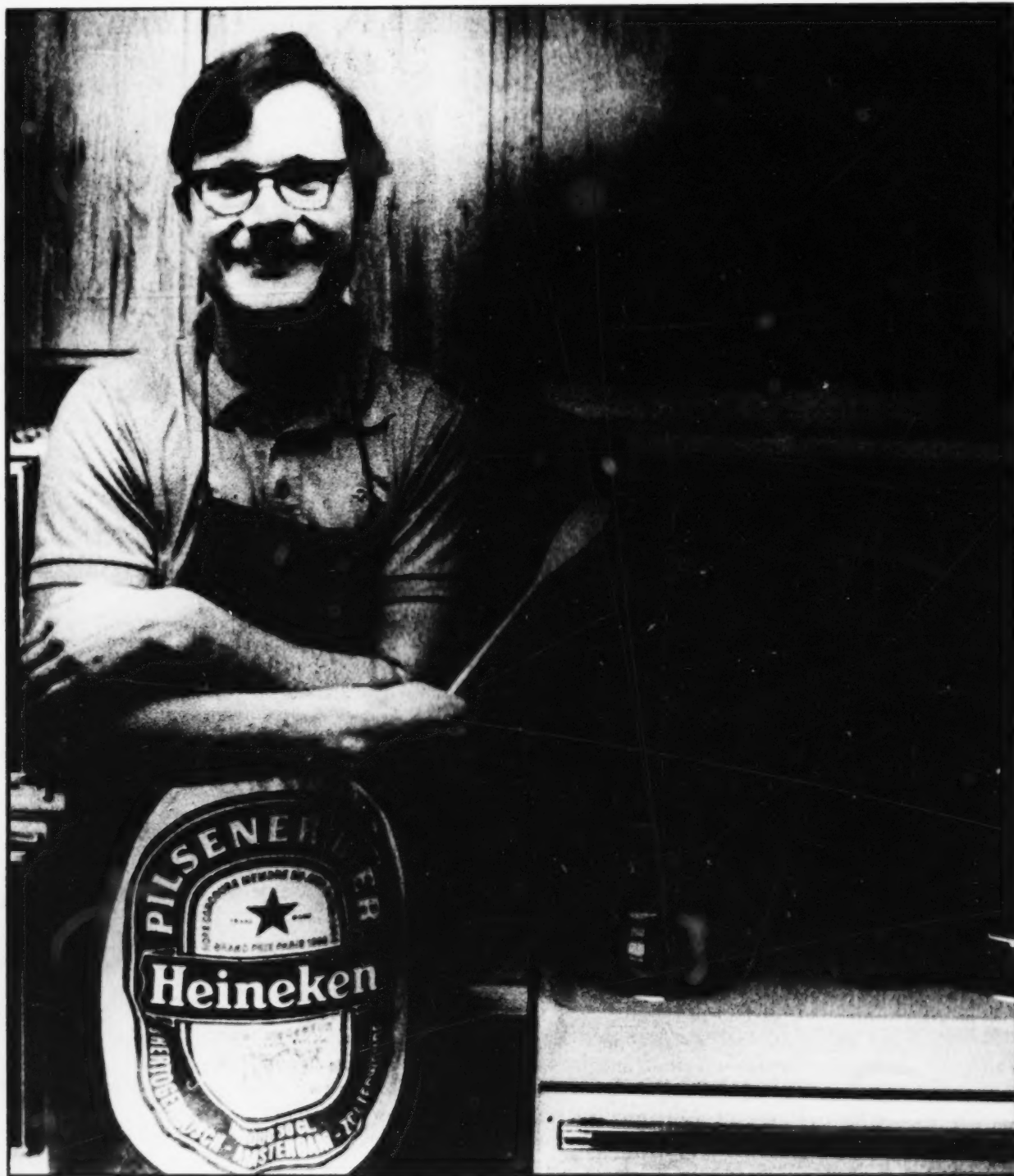


Photo: Ann E. Yow

NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS



Photo: Anne E. Yow

Meridian Motel

DAVID THOMAS

I have been a painter for nine years. I like this job because I move around a lot and meet all kinds of people. This summer I was in Thompson, Manitoba for two months. I was there painting a new high school. The school was on a reservation about thirty miles from Thompson. We stayed at the Meridian Motel and drove to work every day. It took an hour there and an hour back.

I went fishing and got some fish, went to movies and stores and the proverbial bars. I did a lot of dancing and walking.

I came back for my son's birth. I worked during this period.

Me and Serena and my daughter went to the Vancouver game farm for a day. We went to White Rock Beach. We went to Fantasy Gardens to pass the time away.

I start relaxing and start to think about what I should make. So I made a TV stereo stand. I started to build it inside the trailer. I took everything out of the trailer. I painted the inside and began to put power into it. I put a roof and signal light on the trailer and painted the outside.

Aldo

I. P.

When we grew up we had a hard time. My mother wasn't well, so I took care of the house. I cooked, washed and cleaned. One day my sister, my brothers, and I went to wash the clothes in a canal. My sister and I were busy washing the clothes.

All of a sudden we realized my younger brother was lost. We started looking for my brother. Aldo went down to the canal and there was Frank. If we had waited a few more seconds, Frank would have been lost for good. We were very lucky that day.

My First Book

J. M.

Reading my first book in years was quite the real challenge for me. It started off very slow and it is hard for me to understand books. But once I was shown how to read properly, it became much easier for me to learn about books. So this opportunity in my lifetime will open more doors than you can imagine for me.

Tuesday's Surprise

JOYCE

On Tuesday I awoke early. I received a phone call from Paul of Robin's Donuts in Vancouver. He said that I could come to work at 11:00 am. and work until 3:00 pm.

At 9:00 o'clock, I caught the bus. I had my Robin's uniform on, so I wouldn't need to worry about putting it on when I arrived. I took the 330 Vancouver to get to my destination.

When I arrived at Robin's I had time to sit down

and have a coffee and a smoke. Afterwards I began to work. My first task was to learn where all of the equipment was located for everything I needed to use. The second task was to begin by serving the customers and learning how to use the till or cash register. The third task I learned was to clean up the restaurant. First I swept the floor, then I mopped the floor. Later I checked the money and cashed out. Being called to work was a great surprise to me.

NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS

Work

ART PELLIKAN

I don't have any fun. Just work, straight work, from morning to night. My work is construction. My upbringing is that, if you're occupied day and night, you don't get into any trouble. I usually don't get home until 11 pm or two in the morning. I like my work.

Then I met Arlene, and she sort of put things in the right perspective. It's on account of her I'm here tonight, otherwise, I'd still be working. We go to church on Sunday, and then we just drive around. We drove up to Merritt and had a chocolate milkshake. Kind of a long way to go for a milkshake, but that's what we did.

Motorhome

HARRY BUTTERFIELD

About fifteen years ago my father built himself a motorhome. He and my stepmother went to Disneyland and then used to camp in it and go fishing. They also went to Calgary. Then about eight years ago my stepmother took sick. She died in 1980. About the same time my father also took sick. So he sold me his motorhome. The wife and I, on long weekends, were out in it all the time, and when I got my holidays we used to go up to Savona and Salmon Arm. The wife's sister and her husband live ten miles this side of Salmon Arm in a place called Tappen. We had a lot of good times in the old truck, but when hard times came we sold it. I guess it is like they say, all good things must come to an end.

Cleaning the Barn

JOE BEATTY

Walk to the barn
open the door
close your nose
look at the floor.

Pick up the fork
push the crap
to the door.
Throw it out and hope there is
no more.

Pick up the broom
sweep the floor
everything has to go
as before,
out the door.

Walk to the water trough
wash yourself off
so you won't be so smelly
when you go in the house.

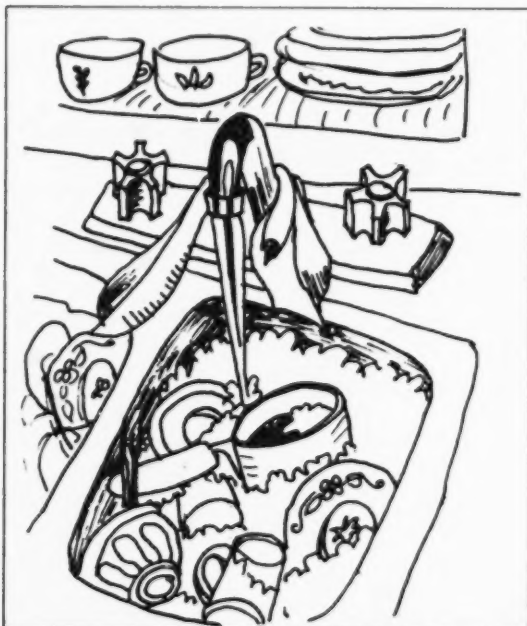


Illustration: Pippa Smyth

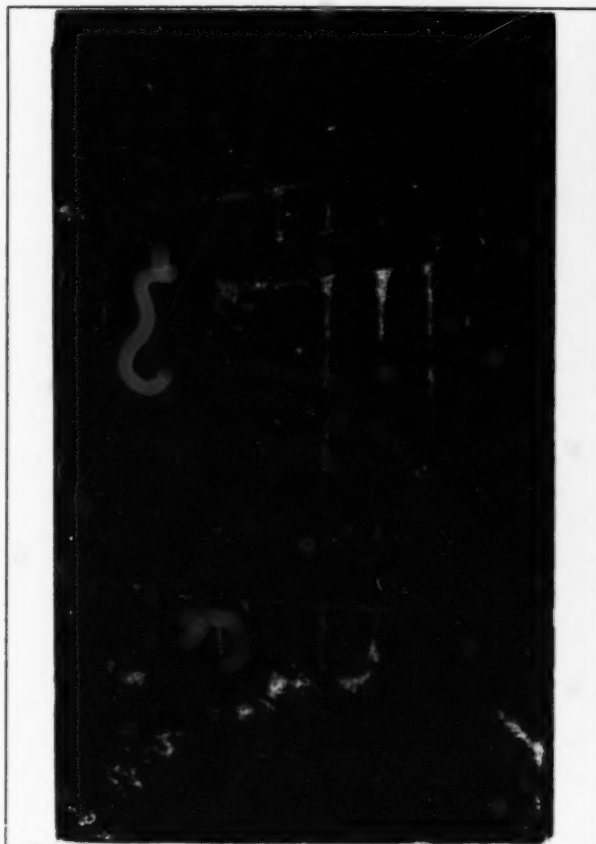


Illustration: Joanne Brown

Dishes

JUDITH MASINGHAM

Get the water going,
put the liquid in,
put the dishes in,
keep the water running
in the other sink.

You wash them, you rinse them,
you put them on the side.
you wash them, you rinse them,
you put them on the side.

In the Same Place

ROY LOGAN

Me and my family were watching a program about literacy, and they were talking about people who can't read or write. I was watching this man trying to read a newspaper, but he couldn't read it. And the thing about that program was it was showing people that there is help for everybody in this country if you want it. I found that program very interesting because I was in the same place when I first started, so I know how he feels.

My Shoes

SHERRY

My name, that's not important. Today I went for a test on my spelling, math and reading. I know I need help in these areas to become a better person. I found out that for spelling and reading I have about a grade 9 level and for math about a grade 5 level. Now get this! I graduated from grade 12, and went to business college and passed. That's what makes me sick. The teachers just let these things slide by. I guess they figured it wasn't important. Now look at me! Today I can't get anywhere. Years ago I had a couple of jobs, but I was fired because of my spelling. Then I ended up at a killing and processing plant for chickens, where I learned every job there, from killing to sawing. Some job. I'd come home stinking rotten. Then

after I got married and we met different people. I somehow seemed out of place. They'd be talking about different things, and I wouldn't have a clue what they were talking about. At times I would ask what this word meant, but most of the time I'd keep quiet. I'm really not too pleased with my life, but I have to go on. This is a big step for me, to come and get help, but I'm glad. I wish the government had some idea of what they are doing to the kids of our country with all these cutbacks. Just because they think they're so high and mighty, I wish some of them were in my shoes. Then we'd see how they like it. It's not too pleasant.

The Bank Holdup

LISA BANKS

Yesterday, when I was in the Royal Bank in Whalley, it was robbed. I was in the bank at the time of the robbery, and I was scared to death. If I was any closer I would have been kicked in the face by the robber as he went over the counter. I hope this never happens again. This better be my first and last robbery. He got away with \$160.00 in small bills, but he must have thought there was more. I thought the robber would put the gun on me. The bank teller screamed as the robber grabbed the money. The robber looked at me as he jumped back over the counter, the look was, "Hey does this impress you?" and then ran out the side door. I think he wanted the money for drugs or just for attention. After he left the bank, it took me forty minutes to get out of there. I had to talk to the police and give them my name and address, and they told me I could leave. When I got back to the car I couldn't think straight, my hands were shaking, and it took me a few hours before I could think clearly.

My First Child

RUBY

When I gave birth to my first child my husband and I were ecstatic. I went to the hospital as I had labour pains. I waited for the birth of my baby. In the meantime, I went to the maternity lounge. A man was sitting in a chair watching television, obviously waiting for the birth of his wife's baby. All of a sudden I started having labour pains. Well, that man freaked out because I was having severe pain. He probably didn't realize what women had to go through to have a baby. He immediately left, with a scared look on his face. He thought I was going to have the baby right there. I finally gave birth to a fair, blonde, soft baby girl. She was the apple of my eye. I always wished for a blonde baby girl, and my wish came true.

Flagging

JUDY HARTLE

Hi. I remember when I was flagging on 176. We were widening the road. The people I met were very interesting. I got to know the mail lady. We would talk all the time. One day we were flagging at an intersection, and the traffic was busy. People were yelling and screaming at us. The traffic was lined up for miles. There was nothing we could do. It was a long day. We finally got the traffic going. They were still screaming. This lady was so angry she drove right into the ditch. The lady was mad. She screamed at us for an hour. Her car was damaged. I have to go now.



What I do at Invergarry

HAROLD "BUD" GAUNT

I do all the xeroxing for all the teachers, I enjoy my job very much. Sometimes I am busy all day and sometimes I am not, it just depends on how busy we get. I like everyone and they like me. I would hate to leave, and I think they would hate to lose me, especially Margaret.

Rainbow's End

MARIE DECEMBER

Ask my son, John, "Is there a pot of gold at the rainbow's end?"

It was in the summer of 1976, and my husband was gill-net fishing on the Fraser River. This particular day John, our son, had gone with his father to help. They had been out fishing on the river for most of the day when late in the afternoon a storm came up. It lasted for half an hour. Then quite suddenly the heavy rains changed to a light shower; the winds that had sent the clouds sailing a few minutes before became a soft gentle breeze. The clouds began to part and the sun's rays filtered through to shine upon the misty rain to create a beautiful rainbow. One end was

on the land and the other end was dancing its colour in the waves of the river. The fish, being attracted to the colours in the water, began to gather together in this dazzling spot. The silver of the fish mixed with the colours of the rainbow was a sight to bedazzle any fourteen-year-old boy. The net had already been set into the river. It drifted right through the rainbow's end. That day was their biggest catch of the season and John received half of the day's take.

His first words to me when he came through the door were, "Mom, there really is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow!"

The War

NICOLINA AMATO

I do remember one time with my Daddy. A beggar lady came to the door to ask for a piece of bread and my Daddy looked at the beggar and went into the house where he had a basket hanging on the wall. He gave some bread to the lady. His eyes got full of tears.

It was 1943. I didn't know that times were hard but I do remember well the lights and the noise from the war. The whole town was scared. They used to hide in a tunnel that they dug themselves. My mom didn't go anywhere because she believed that her time would come no matter where she was.

Trip to Canada

NICOLINA AMATO

In 1973 my parents came to Canada for a visit. They stayed about two months. We were living in Merritt at that time. They liked the scenery they saw, with the trees and the mountains. We had lots of friends to talk to in Italian. They sure enjoyed themselves, especially my dad.

My husband took him fishing to the creek and the lake. He was happy to fish in fresh water, as back home, we have fish just from the ocean. My dad spoke a bit of English. As a young man from age 17 up to 32 he was in Baltimore, USA working in a steel factory. He came back to Italy and married my mom. They stayed in Italy and worked their land. He was the only son in his family and so he had lots of property. He taught my seven year old son a little song, and it goes like this:

I wish I had a nickel

I wish I had a dime

I wish I had a girl

To kiss her all the time.

My son still remembers that song.

NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS



Life

LINDA DERKSEN

When I first started I didn't know how to write a good story or even a poem. Since I have been going to Invergarry School I have written short stories and poems also. It really gives you a different look at yourself. You feel, "Hey I can do that too." For me especially, I feel just great when I can tell people how I feel inside and have them read my stories and poems.

That's why I would like to finish school. I would

like to go for my GED. I know I will have trouble, especially with my math, but if I don't try I will never know, and you are never too old to learn about anything in life.

Then I know I could go out in the world and take anything on because I would know I have all the confidence in the world and the education to go along with it.

Christmas Commercialism

ROSA CISZEK

As Christmas approaches, I find myself becoming more and more upset by the mad rush of commercialism.

Giving, especially at Christmas, is much more important than receiving.

Where I came from Christmas is a religious occasion. It reminds us of the birth of the baby Jesus. Families get together for a large dinner, and for some of them it is the only big dinner of the year. To me it is a bad occasion because it's a reminder of growing up in a poor and dysfunctional home, which has left a great wound in my mind that does not seem to be healing. Coming to Canada made quite a change in my life, especially when it came to Christmas. Working in a shopping centre can be quite exciting at this time of the year, because of the beautiful decorations, but for me it is also painful. I've learned that the majority of the people care most about material things, which have no real value. I sometimes get faced with customers who are very concerned because they don't know what to buy for someone who has everything. I find that statement hard to accept and feel like replying, "Why not buy something for someone who has very little or nothing. And what

about the millions of starving people, who don't have the three basic things for survival: food, clothing, and shelter. It's Christmas for them too." How many of us really think and care about them? And the unemployed or those who try hard to keep up with today's demanding life style. It's a shame that today's society places too much value on material things, and not on the real values of life: people and people's needs. Think for a moment what a beautiful world this would become if everybody would reach out to touch and help someone.

Unfortunately, that's not the case. It seems to me that people do what's best for them, with little or no thought of others. And, again, think if only for Christmas instead of buying gifts, everybody would get together and use that money to provide food and clothing for the needy. What a wonderful thing to do. My message to the world is to think about what I wrote and maybe act on it as well.

If each of us would think about someone who is less fortunate than us, and then act on those feelings, Christmas, as well as everyday, could become what it truly should be.

WORK NOTES

HOBBIES

SHAHIN

I went shopping with my mother. I drove to Vancouver. I bought a lot of wool to make a dress or sweater for my family as a present.

My great hobby here is knitting, but my favorite was reading books. Now I couldn't read much because I have problem with my English. That makes me nervous. Sometimes I just read and read and I forget to think about it when I'm reading.

On the surface, the structure (the way the words are strung together) of "Hobbies" may seem a little awkward. But if we allow ourselves to think about what the words are saying, we can find much in this short work. First we see that Shahin is thinking about her hobbies. We learn that hobbies are important to Shahin and that they connect her to her family (knitting presents) and to the world around her (reading). She reflects on how her move to Canada has affected her hobbies and ends her piece with a powerful statement about reading.

A PICTURE TO LAST

SHAHIN

Two days ago I was pleased to find Vancouver was gorgeous and nice. After a long time of sunny summer, came rain, and that afternoon when I was driving to home I passed the road close to King Edward St. and all the road was covered with coloured leaves. I was very surprised. I just thought, if I could be a bird or tree, I would like to jump all over the leaves and trees. Suddenly I found I was stopped in the middle of the road. I moved my car to the side of the road and kept looking around. What a life! Everything was so beautiful. I couldn't believe it and I couldn't believe that view.

I hope I have been able to write it down 100 percent. I was so sorry I didn't have my camera to take a picture.

This later piece of writing from Shahin shows a wonderful style. She writes about a special moment by describing a scene and her reactions to it. The scene has a profound effect and for a while she loses herself in it. Her style allows the reader to share this moment with her and maybe even reflect on a similar memory of his or her own.

Shahin ends her writing feeling upset because she was unable to take a picture of this scene. I am reminded of that familiar saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words." In Shahin's case, however, I think we could say sometimes 150 words are better than a picture. Much better.

BARNEY #1

JAMES DEXTER MCKOEN

We have a dog his name is Barney, and we also have a cat his name is Morris. Barney is the second dog are first dog's name is Nick.

BARNEY #2

We have a dog named Barney, and we also have a cat named Morris. Barney is our second dog. Our first dog was named Nick. When I was away that dog got hit by a car. I sat down and cried in the group leader's office.

Barney is a cheerful dog. He is jealous of the cat in the winter time because the cat jumps on our laps.

In these stories, James shows the use of revision, the act of rewriting. When we compare the two stories we see that while each talks about the same thing, the stories are very different.

Not completely satisfied with Barney #1, James decided to rewrite. Clearly, he thought about Barney #1 before writing Barney #2. He decided the first piece did not really say what he wanted it to say, so he added information. He also chose to change the way in which he told his story. Both changes have added to Barney #2.

The new information makes Barney #2 a more interesting story to read. Not only does James give us more information about his pets, but we also learn something about the author when he describes his reaction to his first dog's death.

In Barney #2 James has written sentences that are easy to understand and has put these sentences in a logical order. This helps the reader to understand what the author is trying to say.

DREAMS

JAMES DEXTER MCKOEN

I would like to go for 4 or 5 years any place in the world. I would like to see Europe. I believe it is beautiful. In my dreams I see myself in a tavern gambling on the French Riviera, and relaxing on a yacht in the Mediterranean drinking at the bar. I see big mansions looking over the water, I see the French Alps looking over the sea.

My dream takes me to Rome, I see marble figures, the famous coliseums, and other historic sites. The dream carries me to the Greek islands and historic sites and famous marble figures. My mind floats through the snowy Alps to Innsbruck, Austria to Bern, Switzerland where my ears hear the music played by different orchestras in the snowy Alps. My mind can taste the varieties of cheese and wine.

My mind takes me to the source of the Rhine River in the Federal Republic of Germany. There I see a wandering river that flows around castles and beautiful cities and forests. In my mind I see a beautiful Dutch city called Amsterdam. It is beautiful, and surrounded by water.

My mind travels to Copenhagen in Denmark, I see the little mermaid in the harbour. I then travel to London, see Big Ben, London Bridge, and the changing of the guards at Buckingham palace. My mind travels to Paris, France, and I take a boat trip down the Seine River and see the Eiffel Tower.

I would really like to see the countryside throughout Europe. This could take somebody about 5 to 10 years to see it all.

In "Dreams" we see an example of later writing from James. It is a piece of writing that James has worked hard on. Like Barney #2, "Dreams" is the result of revision; it is not James's first try. The writing is well organized and interesting, and it is clear that much thought has gone into it. As a writer, James has made progress. We can see this by looking at Barney #1 and Barney #2 and comparing them with "Dreams." This progress did not just happen. James was able to progress because he was willing to write and to write again, and in between these writings he was willing to talk and think about what he had written and what he needed to do to make his writing better.

I think for many of us, when we try something new or something that is not easy for us, there are traps that take hold of us and use up our energy. These traps exist for beginning writers, and often they are the traps of spelling, punctuation, grammar, interesting topics and confidence. When these traps take hold of us, writing becomes painful and fearful, but when the traps are avoided, writing can become something else entirely. The following three passages are from writers who have avoided some of these traps and for whom writing is more an expression of self than a reflection of what is acceptable according to someone else's standards.

ANGER

JILL KRISTOFFERSON

I'm angry. Yes, angry, hateful, fiery and fuming. My temper is out of control. My boiling point was about 3 pm this afternoon.

Working at the Taxation Centre is not easy. This week is one of the worst weeks that I have had the pleasure of living through. Sometimes I think that I must be a little crazy to work there. Maybe a lot crazy.

Would hitting something or someone help? What about getting drunk? Or maybe screaming at the top of my lungs?

Angry. How do you handle anger? Where has all my patience gone, I do not know. Lately I don't have much of it at all.

Well, what do you know. I felt better after I wrote this. I must remember to do this again.

ABOUT LEARNING

ROY LOGAN

This is about learning to write and spell. I feel I am learning a lot about it. I am doing well. It might not look like it, but I am. I want to prove it to myself.

I CONFESS

HONG NGO

I suddenly realize that I've been healing my life through writing. My life is reviving after two years and this revitalization has come about since I've been attending the literacy class learning how to read and write.

Six years ago, I only wanted to attend school to learn English to be able to communicate with people at work. However, school changed my life, and writing helped me to find myself again after a long time of being lost. For me, school has become church and all that that implies, and my writing book has become a priest, in the traditional role of a confessor.

In the literacy room I choose the table which faces the wall, and with my writing book in front of me, waiting, I feel wonderful. I forget all of the struggles of life. I use my writing as a confession. The more I write, the more I become the person who is the real me. Even though I'm a second language learner, I'm really proud of myself because I can describe all of my feelings in English. The priest, who usually takes my confession, doesn't know how to speak my language and I didn't know how to speak his language when I first met him. However, with my self-confidence and with my will power, I will be able to talk with him, little by little, as he teaches me through my mistakes.

THREE LETTERS

ANNA ARMIT

For all writers, confidence is very important. Writers must be confident that they will be understood by the reader, and that they can choose the right words and arrange these words in the right way. Confidence comes with practise; as you gain more skill through practise, you feel more confident about using this skill.

Because new or beginning writers have had little or no practise writing, they often have little or no confidence in their abilities as writers. But when beginning writing is encouraged and supported, beginning writers can be confident writers. This struggle for confidence, while difficult for all writers, is especially difficult for new writers. Early writing must be strongly encouraged and supported so that new writers will not give up in their efforts before they have gained confidence in their abilities.

The following three letters show us that this struggle for confidence does not always move steadily forward. At times a writer's confidence may disappear, but confidence can be regained through the encouragement and support that comes through dialogue.

These three letters, all by the same writer, Anna, were written over a three month period and are placed in the order they were originally written.

JUNE 27/88

Dear Sheila—Well I know that you are going to be surprised when you get this letter as you have been waiting for a long time, to get answers to the letters you have written to uncle Don and me over the years. The first letter you wrote you were in school, and now are married and a mother, and after all these years comes a letter from your old Tante. How about that?

You must have wondered why I never answered your letters, but being the nice person you are, you never asked when we talked on the telephone. If you had asked I probably would not have told you the truth, as I felt so ashamed of not being able to write or spell. But things have changed, for you see, now I am going to school to learn to write and spell. How about that for an old Tante like me? I never thought that at my age I would be going back to

school. But believe me, Sheila, it's one of the nicest things I have ever done for myself...

Thank you Sheila, for all the lovely letters you have written to Uncle Don and I over the years. Even though you never got an answer back from me, you never gave up writing and I appreciate that very much, as someone else would have given up a long time ago. I want to say thank you for all the lovely pictures you have sent of yourself and your brothers over the years...

I know this is a crazy letter, but I hope you will enjoy reading it, as much as I have enjoyed writing it. I have done a lot of writing since I have been coming to school, and I just love it.

The first day I came to school, I was scared as a little kid on her first day to kindergarten. But boy! Am I ever glad that I came to this school, for it has opened doors for me that I always felt were closed to me. For even though I could read, and understand most of what I read, I realized that I was missing a lot not being able to write. That is changing, and being able to write gives me a feeling of freedom. I don't know if you can understand what I mean, by saying a feeling of freedom, but for me, to be able to write what I think and feel, after all these years, gives me a feeling of freedom from within, and it is wonderful! Well Sheila, I am going to close this crazy letter, but I hope that you will answer soon, and I promise that I will not take as long to answer your letter again now that my writing and spelling have improved. I have no excuse for not answering your letter *tout de suite*.

In this excerpt of a letter we see a sample of writing from a confident writer. Anna's letter shows that she feels good about herself and good about her writing. She is no longer ashamed to talk about her previous writing problems and talks about returning to school as "...one of the nicest things I have ever done for myself." Near the end of her letter, Anna reaffirms her confidence when she writes that "...to write what I think and feel, after all these years, gives me a feeling of freedom from within, and it is wonderful!"

SEPT. 15/88

Dear Mark—When I started writing this, I didn't know if I would be coming back to school or not, as I was hurt and disappointed that my brother and niece hadn't answered my letters. I felt proud of the letters I had written, and had put a lot of effort in typing to make them interesting reading. After waiting several weeks, with no answer, I felt that my letters couldn't have been that interesting. By this time I felt that I was wasting the teacher's time, and I would never be able to spell or write. Every time I would try to write, I couldn't seem to think of anything to write about. I know the reason I felt this way was because I hadn't had an answer to my letters. I feel that it is important for people like myself, who are trying so hard to learn to spell and write to have our work acknowledged by people that already know how to spell and write. I talked it over with Don, and he said that I shouldn't let it bother me that my brother and niece hadn't answered my letters; of course he's right. I came to school to learn for my own benefit, not to impress anyone. So what if my brother and niece didn't like my letters? You, the teachers, have told me they were interesting. As I said before, I do feel proud of my writing. So I am going to put my hurt feelings and disappointment aside and give school my best shot. Now that I have gotten this down on paper I feel better. In a few weeks I will write to my brother again, and will send him one of our magazines. I will make sure that the first thing he sees when he opens the magazine is "Anna's Village". If he doesn't answer after that, it will be his loss not mine.

At the beginning of her second letter, Anna talks about being "hurt and disappointed," and feeling that she "was wasting the teachers time." She has lost confidence as a writer and the result has been that she couldn't seem to think of anything to write about. As the letter continues, Anna describes how she was able to regain her confidence. She talks it over with her husband and her teachers, who tell her the letters are interesting and worthwhile. By talking, Anna is able to get her confidence back, and she ends her letter on a very confident note.

SEPT. 19/88

Hi Mom—I know it has been a while since I have been in touch with you. I was going to call, but I thought maybe you would enjoy a letter instead, as it's been years since I wrote you a letter. Of course you know why I wouldn't write, but since I have been going to school and am improving my spelling and writing, I feel the time has come to write to you, and let you see what I am capable of doing. I would rather call and talk to you, for it's wonderful to hear your voice, but I do enjoy writing.

The school I attend has published a magazine, and all the articles in it are written by students who had the same kind of problem as I have. I will be sending you one of the magazines. You will be able to see how the teachers in this school have helped these people. We are all very proud of the school magazine, it means a great deal to me, as you will see, even though I have only been coming to school for a short time. The teachers found one of my stories interesting enough to have it published in the magazine. Mom, I would love to be there to see the look on your face when you get to "Anna's Village". Bet you never thought that one day I would write a story about "Hubbard's Point". It may not be the best story that was ever written about Hubbard's Point, but it's *mine*. I have done a great deal of writing about my growing years at home. I also have written a fiction story and have tried poetry. I did write a nice article for Mother's Day; I will make a copy of it for you. Nancy had let me have the kids' typewriter, so I am trying my hand at typing. Boy, what next?

The confidence that Anna showed in "Dear Sheila" is back again in "Hi Mom." Here she tells her mother that "I do enjoy writing", and "that it may not be the best story that was written about Hubbard's Point, but it's mine!" Both of these statements tell us that Anna is a confident and comfortable writer. This confidence is wonderfully expressed in the final three words of the letter, "Boy, what next?"

TRANSITIONS

LATER WRITING

From a Journal

HONG NGO

Phuong felt good today and went back to school. Now my turn. Actually, I felt sick before Phuong. When Phuong was sick, I almost forgot about me. Even though I didn't go to school while Phuong was sick, I was busy at home. Sewing, crocheting, cooking, cleaning, reading, writing, and gardening made me forget the time.

Although I chose to be busy rather than sit down and do nothing, I sometimes feel upset, "Why should I work so hard? Work so hard for what?" Then I stop my work, make a cup of coffee, sit down, relax, and think. I work for myself, and I see what I have done. I have a feeling that I'm building a steady foundation. From this base, I confidently step on without worrying, and step by step I can go as far as I want. The most essential quality is patience. I need to do something, and I want to be what I want to be before I die.



Photo: Ann E. Yow

From a Journal

HONG NGO

I was sitting for almost fifteen minutes, but I couldn't write any sentences. I have a lot of things to do. I feel I am behind the clock. I felt a little bit better after I had written some letters to my Aunt in Australia and to my brother in Los Angeles. I wrote to my brother about my trip to Calgary and thanked him for the money that he gave me for the trip.

Every time I look at my thumbs I miss my parents so much. When I was born, my thumbs were different. My right thumb was like my father's thumb and the other was exactly like my mother's thumb. One was longer than a normal thumb, and one was very short.

I remember when I was about eleven or twelve years old, I sometimes cried with my mother because some friends teased and laughed at my thumbs at school. She always consoled me, "Don't put anything they said in your mind. Your special thumbs mean you're a special

person. You can do things that other people can't do."

I felt a little bit better, but the complex was still inside my mind. You were right Mom, I did something that many Vietnamese ladies couldn't do. But did I do the wrong or right thing, Mom? I wish I hadn't lost you.

My mom was born and grew up in a very poor family. My grandparents didn't have enough money for food and that's why she couldn't go to school. Also, they were so old-fashioned, they believed that only boys could go to school and the girls had to stay home and look after the house. My father was luckier than her. He went to Vietnamese and French schools. After they got married, my father taught my mother how to read and write. When my brother and I grew up, he helped her in writing and mathematics. She finally learned to read and write at forty years of age. I admired her, and I was proud of her. So why do I have to hide my thumbs?

I sometimes don't sleep easily because a lot of things are hanging over my head.

I still have two grandmothers in Viet Nam. I miss them a lot. I hope I'll see them again in my life. But when and how? I can't go back, and they don't want to leave the country. They said they were too old, and they wanted to die in their own country. My story is very sad. I try to forget everything in the past, and just think of today and tomorrow. I wish I hadn't wasted time when I was still young, but it's not too late now, I can start again. Everyday I have two questions in my mind. Before I go to bed I ask myself, "What did I do today? Did I learn something today?" And after I get up in the

morning I ask, "What will I plan to do today?"

I sometimes feel so ashamed. When I was a little girl, my mother wanted me to become a nurse. I wanted to be a teacher, but I am a worker now. I used to pretend I was a teacher for my sisters and some friend. We played a game. They called me "teacher," and I read them a dictation or gave them some math.

They set up a desk for me, and I sat separately. After they finished their work, they brought it to me to correct, and I gave them a grade.

I remember my younger sister who always had many wrong, but she wanted a high score. She often talked to my mother and said that I didn't like her.

A Story

JEAN WRIGHT

Once upon a time there was this lady who always wanted to go back to school to finish her education. The reason why she did not finish her schooling in earlier years is because she got married quite young and had children. She always hoped that one day they would be all grown up and taking care of themselves, and then she would go back to school and finish her schooling.

Her goal was to get her Grade 12, and go on to further study, and to achieve what she wants. Then one day she got this magazine that had all the schools and courses that you can take to finish your schooling. So, she picked the one that suited her best for adults and for people who work shifts.

She then phoned and got an appointment with one of the teachers. She registered for her class and paid for it out of her own money that she had worked for. She started going to the school. She had two teachers. One who worked days and a different one who worked evenings. Her classes were 12:00 (noon) to 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm. She was told that she was doing o.k. and was going to be sent to a little harder class. She said, "Yes, I'm willing to try anything that will let me learn and get ahead."

When the new semester started she went to this new class where she tried very hard to do her best in her writing and reading skills. She was in the class, doing fine and she felt that she was doing well. Her teacher always wrote little things at the bottom of her printing telling her how she was doing. For example, she would say, "well written Kate," "good writing" etc. which made her feel good, because it gave her an uplift in spirit even though she got asked sometimes "did you do this yourself, did you come up with this idea yourself?" It made her feel like a loser, like she had no brains and couldn't think.

On her work she received good marks until one day she completed a test and did not get a very good mark. The reason for that was that she was very tired at the time. She had no one at home to help her or to ask questions, but she tried her best. One day she came to her class about 1/2 an hour late, and she did not get to study her spelling so she did poorly.

At break time the teacher said, "I would like to talk to you before you leave." So she waited for her. The teacher then told her that her writing was not good, and she then said, "I don't know what to do with you or where to put you because you need time." Everything was just a mess. When the lady went to that class, the impression that she had was that you learn at your own pace, no rushing. What she noticed in this class is that all they do is rush. They want you to do everything in one shot. At the moment when the teacher was talking to her she did not realize what was going on. But when she went home and relaxed, she realized what the teacher had

been saying. It seemed to be that she was no good, for this class, she should stop coming here, or go somewhere else because she was not learning anything. Anyway, to cut the story short the teacher made her feel like she was not welcome. She felt unwanted. This lady liked to sit alone because she thinks better, and she was the only minority in the group. She felt very humiliated, discouraged and unhappy.

P.S. In her nation, other nations feel that the only thing people from her nation are good for is to be maids or slaves. But in this lady's mind, and when she spoke to others, she said she would never, never give up until she got what she wanted. Even though they are trying to keep her down by discouraging her.

A Street Kid

RON GODDARD

This is about one of my daughter's friends. He is eighteen and has a lot of problems. He was told by his parents to leave home and has been out of the house for nine months. He has a lot of trouble dealing with life. He tried to get back home and was told to leave. So back on the streets he goes. Now the trouble starts again. What do you do when your parents and family don't want you? They call you crazy and tell you to commit yourself.

The trouble with this is that now he thinks he is crazy. If he had a place to go for help it would be the best thing for him. He had cut his wrists, and taken a lot of pills to try and end his life. The kid is very smart, he knows how to make people feel sorry for him. I guess after you live on the streets you get street wise. The kid needs to go for help. We can only tell him to go. He will go but not too much can be done for him. His age is against him, because they will find help for the younger kids first, and there are lots of kids out there that need help. Where it will end up for him I don't know. But I just hope he will find the help he needs. He was staying with us, but we can't afford to be feeding him everyday. He could eat you out of house and home in no time. He has parents

of his own, and they should be the ones helping him look for help but the only help they give him is to tell him to get lost. I don't know what happened between him and his parents, but whatever it was, it must have been very bad. If I didn't have kids of my own at home I would try to help this kid more. But my family is more important to me than anything else. My kids think they have it hard, but do they? They tell us this kid is using us. We know he is, but if you're hungry you will do anything for something to eat, and call on all your friends for a place to stay. So how hard do they have it? You can call this kid a user, but he has had to learn to be a user to make it in life. So if you take the time to talk to him you can see some of the pain he holds inside of him. The pain of not being loved or wanted by family or friends is the most pain he holds. But knowing his mom and dad don't love him anymore really hurts.

So he has a lot to get over and that will be hard to do. So all I can say is that I hope he will make it on his own. I just hope my kids will love us for what we are and the way we are. For my life is built around my wife and kids, with all the love I can give.



Illustration: Pippa Smyth

The Contest

JILL KRISTOFFERSON

One Saturday afternoon our Mom and Dad were invited to the Greenhouse's who lived next door, for a little house party. All of us kids were to play outside in the backyard while the parents were in the house. The older kids looked after the younger ones. As the afternoon rolled along we could hear loud roars of laughter every now and then. I got bored with my younger friends so I slowly inched my way into the house trying to be as quiet as a mouse. As I was inching my way into the kitchen I could hear that they were telling dirty jokes. The room got deadly silent as soon as the parents saw me enter the room. You would have thought the house was on fire because there was so much cigarette smoke hanging from the ceiling that your eyes burned in five minutes.

In a few minutes, Mr. Greenhouse slapped my father on the back and asked him if he would arm wrestle. Dad didn't answer. Mr. Greenhouse asked my father again if he would arm wrestle with him. "No," replied Dad. Mr. Abbott, another neighbour from across the street changed the subject by asking my Dad if he had ever boxed. "Yes, in the navy," answered Dad. With that fuel added to the fire, Mr. Greenhouse suggested that they step outside and have a few friendly rounds of boxing. Dad turned that request down. A few drinks later the subject turned to boxing again. Mr. Greenhouse pumped Dad to have a few rounds. "No," Dad answered. Then all the men around the table shouted to my Dad to go ahead and fight a few rounds.

Mom told me years later that Dad didn't box anymore because he just about killed a fellow shipmate. You see my Dad had very huge and powerful arms and a muscular body to match.

A tall drink passed Mr. Greenhouse's lips as he once again demanded a contest, all the while yelling that my Dad was "chicken" and that he could knock him out in the first two minutes. My Dad didn't believe in senseless violence so he just told Mr. Greenhouse that if he could rip a Vancouver phone book in half that he would fight him. Mr. Greenhouse scratched his head in puzzlement and exclaimed that that was impossible. Dad laughed saying he could do it. So I ran home to get our brand new telephone book.

Sitting straight in his chair, legs together, he gripped the big book with both hands one on each end. The countdown began. Three, two, one. Veins exploded, muscles flexed and teeth gritted as the book began to rip page by page. Eyes stared in amazement, fascination and disbelief as the book began to come apart. The spectators and Mr. Greenhouse stared in surprise as Dad had both halves of the telephone book in his hands in no time flat. He threw both halves on the table and said, "Try and beat that. This contest is now over." And with that he grabbed Mom and me and off to home we went.



The Joke

JILL KRISTOFFERSON

One boring night my father was sitting in the living room by himself as he had not a thing to do. Mom always worked the night shift and my dad worked days. Dad would have had all of us girls in bed by 8:00 o'clock which gave him the rest of the evening free to do as he pleased.

He was pacing the floor back and forth, back and forth like a caged animal, thinking he would go mad with boredom. He was going to the window looking out and going to the front door checking the lock, then moving through the house to the back door, looking out and checking the lock there, too. On the way back to the front room, he decided to check in on us in our bedroom.

As he was tucking us in and making sure that we were all covered up in blankets, he spotted my teddy bear. Quietly and cautiously he took Teddy from my arms. Smiling to himself as he turned and crept from the bedside, and with a quick last look over his shoulder at us, he then closed the door as he left. As he walked towards the kitchen, he almost had a skip in his walk. Once in the kitchen he went to work on his project immediately.

First, he went to the broom closet to retrieve the broom and some string. Back at the table he tied Teddy to the top of the broom. He leaned the broom against the table, and stepped back to have a look and smiled again. He ran to the back door, as that is where all of the coats were, and took out his big, long, navy blue duffel coat.

On Teddy it went. Then he went charging downstairs to his bedroom to get two pillows and an old sea-Captain's hat. He tied the pillow around Teddy under the coat and placed the hat on top of Teddy's head. From there he walked to the cupboard to get a box of Kellogg's Corn flakes, as there was a Halloween mask on the back of it.

With the scissors he cut it out and tied it on Teddy's face. Finished, Dad picked up Teddy and placed him on the landing which led to the basement and onto the bedroom. He turned all of the lights out except a light in the kitchen which shone on the basement door.

It was now 1:30 am and my mother, who was very tired from work, was coming home to a quiet, darkened house. She let herself in with her key, shrugged off her coat and slowly headed for the basement door. When she opened it, she saw this dark green-faced man standing on the landing. Well! She screamed and screamed and screamed.

Dad came running out from his bedroom and up the stairs to see what was wrong. He was halfway up the stairs when he stopped dead in his tracks, and looked up at the shadowy figure. His face was

white with fear, as he had forgotten about his little trick. Suddenly he started to laugh, as he realized who the intruder was. He finished climbing the stairs to find Mom, in order to tell her about the joke, and to show her the out-of-space man. Mom was not amused. In fact, it took her 30 years to be able to laugh about it.



Photo: Ann E. Yow

Life in Prison

TOBY TAYLOR

When I first came into prison I was scared of the unknown just like everyone is when they first come in the gates. It's like dying and going to Hell, and then being reborn to start all over in a new world, which is not like any world you have ever known. Prison is a place where everything is the same and everyone is a number. A place where the strong lead and the weak follow. It is a place where you have got to live in fear, hate and resentment. Time after time I've sat in my room and said to myself, I wish I had something to do. But it's the same old thing day after day. Long boring hours and constant idleness which never seems to end. It is a routine that you get used to after some time has passed, and you stop thinking about the outside, because when you don't see the outside for so long you just don't think or worry about it any longer. Sometimes I think to myself how nice it would be if I was out on the street with my little girl looking in at a place like this. And then I would say to myself that it was not nice at all to look in at people that could not look out at me. The only people that know about the prison are the people that have got to live in prison. The officers don't know about it because they just work 8 hours a day and 5 days a week. So I don't know how they could say that they know all about prison. Some people say prison is like a big city with no women and no cars, and you have to eat just about the same thing every week. One meal is the same as the next. Some people say that we are in prison to be rehabilitated, but I have not seen one person in prison that has been rehabilitated. The only good thing in prison is that you can get a free education if you want one. Just about everyone I know in prison has their GED, except for me. And before I leave I will have mine. Before I came into prison I could not read a book, but I got help from some of the best friends that a man could have. And from my teacher at Deberry, who has helped me so much in so many ways.

I will never forget any of these people for as long as I can see to read a book. And I can see damn good right

now. I'm not saying that you have got to come to prison to get an education. There are many ways to get an education at home. So now I leave you with these words. It's not good but it will do until something good comes along.



Illustration: Jaxon

Tempting Fate

ANDREA

I asked to borrow my brother's car that morning because my own car had too much heat; the police knew it too well. My plans for the day were to pick my boyfriend up a few blocks from the penitentiary, then take him to lunch at "our" restaurant.

I had a feeling about this day. I knew that what I was doing was illegal according to one of my bail stipulations, which read that I was to have no contact with my boyfriend. I didn't care. I hadn't seen him in months and today was supposed to be our big day.

The rain poured down in buckets on the little red Datsun. I quickly jumped in and tried to start it. After many attempts, I ran back to the house. I woke my brother to tell him his battery had been stolen. My brother gave me a look of disgust and told me I had to flick the toggle switch on the left to start the fuel pump. I followed his instructions. It started with a growl, then continued with a constant purr. Before I pulled out of the driveway I plugged my favourite tape in and put the volume on seven. I was on the road.

The traffic on the freeway was light so I knew there was still a chance to get there on time. I began to relax a bit. The car was warm and filled with loud music. I really thought this was going to be a fantastic day. Together again, that thought made the butterflies in my stomach dance in anticipation. Then suddenly, I was brought out of my dreamy thoughts when I noticed the car was drifting to the left towards the boulevard on a puddle of water. Panic made me yank the steering wheel hard to the right, causing the tires to grip the wet pavement. The car sped into the right hand lane and spun into the opposite direction. I became limp. I knew that moment that the car was going off the road. The last thing I saw was the white highway reflector. The driver's side door hit it and sent it flying. The car tipped over and rolled three times down the muddy embankment. I closed my eyes. I no longer felt anything. It all

happened so quickly.

When I opened my eyes the car was resting on its front end. Luckily, I had the seat belt and the shoulder strap on, which held me dangling in the seat. I couldn't believe what I saw! The cassette player, that had been mounted in the dashboard, was in the back seat. My brother's tool box, tools, ski poles and spare tire were scattered, in the mud for at least fifty feet. The fence that once stood along side of the freeway was a mess of poles and metal mesh. The only thing that was still intact was the rollbar, that my brother installed two days earlier. The car's roof was bent around the bar, which was looming faithfully over my head. Many minutes passed and I was still unsuccessfully trying to release myself from the confinement of the seat belt.

The police arrived, treating me as if I had done some crime, probably assuming I was drunk. They helped me out of the crumpled car. Tears rolled down my face. My brother's first car—his baby—was totaled. If he ever spoke to me again, I would be surprised. My plans were ruined. At that point I wished I could have died.

The police had me walk a straight line with my head up and touch my nose. I was sober. They then called a tow truck. They left me to wait, standing on the side of the freeway.

Later that afternoon, my mom told me my boyfriend, his mother and my mom went to "our" restaurant for lunch, without me. Undercover police were there also, holding their menus in front of their faces to avoid recognition. My mom remembered them as soon as she saw them. If I had made it, I would have been back in jail that day.

As for my brother, he was very angry. But he also knew it was only an accident and he was glad to see me alive. Now when I reflect back, I still wonder if it was fate.

My Conversation

JENNIFER WISHINSKI

Jennifer: Why are you so hostile towards your brother?

Self: Because he's a wimp and on my case.

Jennifer: Yeah but does he really know everything?

Self: My brother will know everything when pigs fly! When he reads that stupid Almanac it drives me insane.

Jennifer: Why does it bother you when he reads the Almanac?

Self: Because he thinks that if a person gains all the knowledge of history and statistics he'll be a millionaire or something. He must because he doesn't care if he has no job. And he has to live off me and my Mom, but if he reads that, he's paying his dues to society by being so smart. People want to use physical violence on his little body.

Jennifer: Are you simply jealous because he knows a

lot about history and aerodynamics and calculus and trigonometry and stuff?

Self: NO WAY! I believe it's great to read and be intelligent and gain information. But I also pay my way! I try to learn things that will help my future. Who cares and what good is it gonna do you to know all the history of the Hatfields and McCoys when you get a job? Information like that is only good if you work for the writers for Tom and Jerry cartoons! I feel like he should open his eyes and gain knowledge about work and life and people and making money and socializing. Not stuff nobody really needs to know. He lectured me on how active a god damn container of yogurt is. How bacteria multiply when it was on my spoon. Well who cares? I only said it was tasty!

Panzee

KATHY YACIW

I remember a cat I had when I was younger. He was just an ordinary house cat, but to me he was special. I still remember the day I got him; my mother had said I couldn't have one of the neighbour's kittens. I begged and begged, but she wouldn't give in. Oh, how I wanted that kitten so badly; I had even picked one out. So when my dad came home that night I asked him and he said yes.

By this time the neighbours had gone out, so I sat on the front steps of the house next to theirs for what seemed like hours and hours for them to come home. When they finally came home I think I must have been the happiest kid in the whole world.

I took the little kitten I had picked out; he was so small with one white and one brown eye. His back was brown and black with a white tummy, and his tail looked like

that of a raccoon. He looked just like a little flower to me, so I called him Panzee. I had Panzee for about ten to twelve years and over the years we became very good friends, never far from each other.

In the Winter time I saved up, so I could buy him a coat to wear out in the snow. And in the Summer when my family would go on holidays we would take Panzee with us. We had lots of good times together, he gave me lots of memories. Then one day when I was about sixteen it all came to an end.

I had gone out for lunch and on the way home I saw him on the road; he had been hit by a car. I was so upset that my sister and boyfriend had to go and get him for me. He's now buried in a little grave on a hill overlooking a creek. I still go there every now and then just to remember.

Father Dreams

SONIA ELMADANI

My father was a dark-haired man and his hair had not turned grey. He looked much younger than many of his age. He was distinctive, sophisticated and charming; very warm and impressive. Yet his manner was low-key and attentive. He liked to play backgammon and chess, especially with a good competitor.

My father was a very young man about 19 when he finished music school. For a short time, my father played in the city opera. He was also a very talented man with many interests, and he naturally loved music and art. He was professionally involved in both until he was 28 years old.

He then started teaching children and adults piano and accordion. He was also actively involved in the only male church choir. In his spare time he played in a band in a local dance hall, at other times he toured small towns and near by islands. As long as I can remember he gave lessons for the children without charge.

He was also naturally an artist. He painted the Fresco of our early history in our local church. The Fresco is a very large painting having a religious motif. My father also painted an early Christian theme scene. He painted another theme about a Croatian warrior captain, Peter Cruz. When my father grew older, after World War II, his responsibility began to change. My father started to work as a painter in a local cement factory which was established in 1563, the first one in the basin region. Money was better, but the working conditions were much harder.

Every morning he got a ride with his company truck. He worked long hours and sometimes the night shifts. Once I toured through the cement factory underground in a very small elevator. My father worked on a silo project that baked cement. My father painted a special colour coating on the silo that endured hot fire. After that visit I felt very sad thinking about how hard life and work were for my father.



Photo: Ann E. Yow

The Run

JENNIFER

A year ago I went to a private school. The private school I went to was really into sports. One of the sports was running. I always wanted to be a fast runner but I didn't have the ability (I thought).

My gym teacher made us run a mile five times a week. All the other kids complained, but I took advantage of this. My gym teacher saw my improvement in running. She told me about this school race they would be having. She also said, "You will have to work harder for your training and that means running every day at lunch time."

So I ran every day at lunch time. I had a month to train. I had to be able to run a mile in six minutes. I practised every day so I would be able to run the race in six minutes.

I started to get discouraged in my practising because I just couldn't seem to run any faster. I talked to my gym teacher about this. She said, "I know a way you can increase your pace by taking longer steps." So I tried this for a few weeks.

I started to see the difference in my speed. Before I was running a mile in eight minutes and five seconds, and now I was running it in seven minutes and twenty seconds. My gym teacher said I had to be faster. I felt like I was being pushed to be faster. Before I did it for fun, but now it was a chore.

I had a week and a half to run the mile in six minutes. My gym teacher said, "I want you to start running after school because you have to win!" I was mad at her attitude towards me. It was not like I was not trying; I was! So I ran after school.

I was overdoing it but I didn't realize it. My knees were in pain and it really hurt when I walked upstairs. My mom took me to the doctor. The doctor said that the fibre in my knees had torn apart. He said I should not run for a month or two because I had done some real damage. He continued on to say, "In the time you are resting, the torn fibres will eventually grow back together."

I was so upset by this information. I thought to myself, "How will I be able to tell my gym teacher?" So I decided not to, and to bear with the pain.

I still ran at lunch time. I had half a week until the race. I strove and pushed harder to run that mile in six minutes. I ran a mile in six minutes two days before the race. I told my gym teacher, and she didn't believe me so I ran again to show her. I wanted to really impress her. So I ran faster than I should have, but I ran it in five minutes and fifty seconds. She was really impressed with me. I was really in pain and my knees throbbed with pain. I was sore but I didn't tell anybody.

The day before the race I was hurting badly. I thought to myself how will I be able to run this race in pain? The day of the race came and runners came to the race spot to go over the trail. I could not believe it was only a mile. I asked the trainer how far this run is and he said, "A mile and a half." I said, "I thought it was supposed to be a mile." He said, "But things have changed." I said, "Thanks a lot."

We all went back to the school to prepare for the race. I was so nervous that I would lose.

An hour later we all went back to the track field for the real thing. I was warming up when these girls who were near me said how they have private trainers and coaches.

The trainer called us all together so we could start the race. We were all lined up and ready to go. Bang, and off we all went. Things were fine, until halfway through the race when my knees decided to give up, but I didn't. I was in seventh place when my knees began hurting. I just wanted to get this race over with, so I went faster. I pushed my hardest. I was in fourth place and close to the finish line, but this girl came whipping up to me, and we ran beside each other for a few seconds. And then she just gave her all, I was trying my hardest but my knees were in so much pain. I felt like stopping but I didn't.

I lost the race and I came in fifth place. I was upset but at the same time happy because I ran a mile and a half in eight minutes and seven seconds. I went back to the school upset. I know I lost the race, but I don't care anymore because I know in my mind that I can whip their butts now. I am still running now and I enjoy it!



UKJESE '88

My First Prize For Poetry

SONIA BARTEK

As far back as my memory can go I have been creating poems. I received first prize on my poem when I was 12 years old, which I recited in public. It happened like this—our literature teacher in school gave us children homework which was to recite from memory a poem about a soldier, who had died in the army. I didn't learn the poem at home. I never learned any of the poems at home. I didn't have to, because after I read or heard a poem one time, I memorized it. (I feel, if the English language would be taught in rhyme, I would learn it as easy as poetry.) However, going back to that poem: In the next literature class, 32 pupils, one by one, had to go to the front of the class and recite with unhappy voices that poem, because the poem was sad. After the recitation each child received 2 marks—one for memorizing the poem, the other one for recitation.

The more sadness you could put into recitation, the better mark you received. That meant 32 sad recitations. After a time, while I listened to the other children recite, I played with the words of that poem. With a few simple changes I made a sad poem happy. I think war is a horrible thing. It is good to teach children to be thankful for peace, which others have had to pay for with their lives. However, how can children full of life who have

never experienced the war possibly feel like that soldier? I think if that soldier was alive, he would not be angry with me. I brought that new version to my friend Veronica who was sharing the same desk with me in school. She read it and started to laugh loudly. The teacher asked her why she had laughed. She couldn't

answer; she just laughed uncontrollably. The teacher sent Veronica out of class, telling her that when she stopped laughing, she could come back. She was back before it was my turn to recite and she made a wager with me that I couldn't recite my new version to the teacher. It was not easy for me to do, but I promised to. Why? Because I really liked to make Veronica laugh. She laughed less often than before, because of the tension between her parents. I have never heard anyone in my life laugh so naturally from their heart as Veronica did. I recited only the first

sentences and the whole class was laughing, including me. Only the teacher remained serious. She sent me to sit down and gave me the worst marks. At the end of the lesson I received a notice from her for my parents to come to school—I hadn't expected that.

I didn't know what she told my father, but when he returned from school I received the first prize in my life for a poem—on my behind.

**“I feel, if the
English
language would
be taught in
rhyme, I would
learn it as easy
as poetry”**

My Uncle

HELMUT A. KRAFT

My mother gave me instructions to where my Aunt might be working; every other day she worked for a different farmer and it took a bit of a walk before I tracked her down in those fields. Her two boys were also with her, playing in the stubble field as their mother was stacking the harvest in a row to dry. She was very surprised to see me there and when I told her that a man named Albert was at our house she took off without us and left us behind in the fields. We, slowly like boys, made it home, and also our legs were a little short to keep up with a grown up person. When we arrived home, we remembered my mother was frying bacon and eggs in the afternoon. My Aunt was sitting very close to my Uncle like lovers do today. My cousins were told that this man was their father.

It was strange not to see instant affection from the two boys, who never could remember seeing their father before. Uncle Albert got up, held them close to him and squeezed a little. Arthur, the youngest, turned

away from him and looked at me with a slight smile. That day my family talked long and loud and we boys were allowed to listen even though a lot of it made no sense to us at that time.

Uncle Albert and his family moved to town and started working on the wharf 100 kilometers north of us. Only on weekends did he come home. Sometimes I saw him in church or if I was allowed to go and play with my cousins. On one day like that my Uncle started to chase my Aunt around the table and they ended up on the couch smooching. We were asked to leave and go for a long walk. After awhile I suggested to Ernst, who was a little older than I and a lot quieter than most of us, that their parents were having sex. But he argued that people don't do those things and that only boys talk that dirty, and only animals don't know any better. In the end we agreed that we had never seen anybody do it. After a long walk we all returned to our homes.

Little Goats

HELMUT A. KRAFT

I have taken the writings of a woman home and read them. Her story had an immediate effect on me. It took me back to my childhood. Her first story was about how primitive she and her husband had lived near Edmonton with all their sheep and how hard they had to work to make things go for them. I can feel for that woman, knowing what 30-40 below Fahrenheit meant. We also had goats at home and they had their babies at all different times and my mom had them staked in all different places to keep warm and so they would not

take off. She had barrels all over the house and out of every barrel were coming cries of little goats. I guess after they were real hungry they were given back to their mothers. I have no way of finding out why my mother did that this way because she is not among us anymore. As a boy I thought it was a little strange to have all those animals in the livingroom and kitchen, but we never got any visitors and my mother's philosophy was always: so what, or big deal. If they don't like it they can always leave.

Dreams, Hopes, Disappointment

LILIAN FIELD



As the night approached, Marie found herself sitting back to relax, but her mind was still going over the schedule of the day.

She came from a small town, whose population was four hundred and fifty three. In the 23 years of her life, moving to Toronto was the most exciting thing that had happened. Living in a town that has no hustle and bustle, the people tend to develop an easy going, laid-back attitude. People drive slower and take longer lunches. To an outsider it would seem that they have an endless supply of hours in a day.

Once the preparations for the move started, the excitement was incredible. On the train to Toronto her excitement was replaced with a different feeling, and the pulsing in her throat was almost an ache. Some friends and neighbours had also tried to prepare her for the big change. Like the majority of people, Marie was the same in thinking that nothing bad could ever happen to her. So the stories she was told were shrugged off.

A new job was used more as an excuse, for it was no different than what she used to do. It was the dream-like ideas of how she was going to spend her after hours and weekends that had brought her. In a small town you can find yourself stifled, where in a large town there is an endless variety of things to do.

For three months now Marie had been living in Toronto, and a subtle disappointment was forming. More truthful was the feeling of not being able to cut the mustard. The job turned out to be more of a challenge, and on many occasions she had to work after hours to catch up. Once the weekends came any ideas on going out disappeared. She was too tired and just doing her laundry, shopping and cleaning of the apartment was enough.

It was when she was relaxed, as now, and past the stage of thinking that her dreams from before would emerge. In her last awareness before sinking into deep sleep, a memory of something Grandma used to say crept in, "Tomorrow is another day and things always look brighter in the morning."



Illustrations: Pippa Smyth

Tough Night on the Bus

MILA EISNER



Photo: Ann E. Yow

Once a young man tried to high-jack a bus with thirty hostages and force it across the Czech-German border.

When he was a teenager, he preferred to play with explosives and weapons. This was strongly illegal and nobody could buy any weapons or cartridges. He had a hard time providing them, but he was crazy about his hobby, and he spent a lot of energy and time for this. He was seriously injured too.

When he was over twenty years old, his friend taught him how to open locked cars. He learned something about electricity, and he used both experiences to prepare a high-jacking attempt.

He prepared two boxes with explosives, nuts, screws and rocks. He used double cables for connection and 9V batteries for contact.

He got onto the long distance bus, Praha-Ceske Budejovice, before the bus arrived at the terminal, he announced the high-jacking to the passengers.

With the gun in one hand and the contacts in the other, he forced the bus driver to drive to the border. When the border officer stopped the bus, the high-jacker sent out from the bus four men with a scheme

(diagram) of the bombs, to explain to the crew, what was going on. After checking the scheme, the crew knew, this was a very serious case and started playing with him for time. They invented many reasons for their delay. The crews on the border have to be trained to handle high-jackers. They have many contingency plans.

In this case they pretended that he would have to talk with a German border officer. One Czech officer, with a good German accent, made the conditions for him through a CB. Of course, he had to let go of his hostages. They explained to him, that this would be good for him, because on the German side were TV reporters and journalists, and he could be charged with high-jacking. They told him that the Czech side could not do anything to him anymore, because he was now the responsibility of the Germans.

He let the hostages go out and took four Czech officers inside the bus. The CB ordered him to disconnect the bombs. This moment was fateful for him. Four officers jumped and caught him. The bus driver put the bus into reverse and came back to the border station.

The man went to jail.

Immigration To Canada

HEDY KRENTZ

(...continued from issue number one)

A few days went by that the sea was calm. It was September, but the sun was still warm. Lots of people were sunbathing or playing cards and there was always a singer or a band playing in one of the many lounges. In the evening we would go dancing. I had a good time. No work, only to look out for my own well-being. Three good days went by with calm seas and bright sunshine, but on the fourth day the waves got bigger and bigger, and a storm came up and the skies darkened. It started to look like night in the middle of the afternoon.

The seamen told everyone to go inside. The storm grew and the waves rose so high that I couldn't see anything out of the window, only water. I saw the seamen bolting all the doors and stringing heavy ropes over the decks. It was fascinating to look at how they were working in the storm. The ropes helped them to move around so they would not fall off into the sea.

I felt loneliness and fear creeping over my whole body and I started to get seasick. The storm bell was ringing and when I went down to my cabin our steward told us that we were in the midst of a hurricane. By now I felt awful. My face was white like a sheet. The steward looked at me and he told me to lie down.

The two children were already in bed and felt sick, but the lady was still doing fine. The steward brought me some tea and toast and medicine. The only trouble was, I couldn't keep anything in my stomach.

The second day I was so sick that the ship's doctor had to come. He gave me some more medicine and a sleeping pill and told me that there was not much else

that he could do for me. I was scared and my mind was drifting to home and to Canada where my friend was waiting. By now the doctor came twice a day because I didn't have any signs of getting better.

I told the steward that I thought I would die. He got angry and told me not to think like that. He came now every half an hour to bring more tea and toast. Four days passed and the hurricane blew itself out and only a light storm remained.

I could hear people rushing around again. The storm bell was quiet now and I was feeling much better. The next morning the steward came in and told me that I should get up and he would help me up onto the deck. I was so weak that I had trouble getting dressed. The steward looked at me and he smiled and told me to look in the mirror. I didn't like what I saw. My face was white and there was no colour left in it. I still remember his words when he said, "You had better get a suntan in a hurry so your friend will not see you like this." He always admired my fresh look and my rosy cheeks.

I went up onto the deck and it was delightful to see the sun, especially now that I could breathe in the fresh air.

Far on the horizon we could see an iceberg floating by. Our trip should have taken nine days, but we were already two and a half days late and everyone was looking forward to the day of arrival. I was feeling better by now and the food was excellent. The steward was pleased with my looks, because the colour in my face had now turned into a golden brown suntan.

Early the next morning someone shouted, "Look out there. There are dolphins and whales nearby." I thought

**The storm bell
was ringing and
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hurricane.**

TRANSITIONS

LATER WRITING

that no one would ever forget the sight of how graceful those animals were, swimming by the ship. A seaman came by and told us that we could see land in a very short time.

By now the decks were crowded. Everyone was looking for land, but it took until the next morning before we could see land, the land of Canada, our new home. I could see on the faces of the people that all were relieved and they looked happier for this relief. It had been a long time since I had heard so much talk going on and seen so many smiling faces. From now on each of us was looking forward to a brighter future.

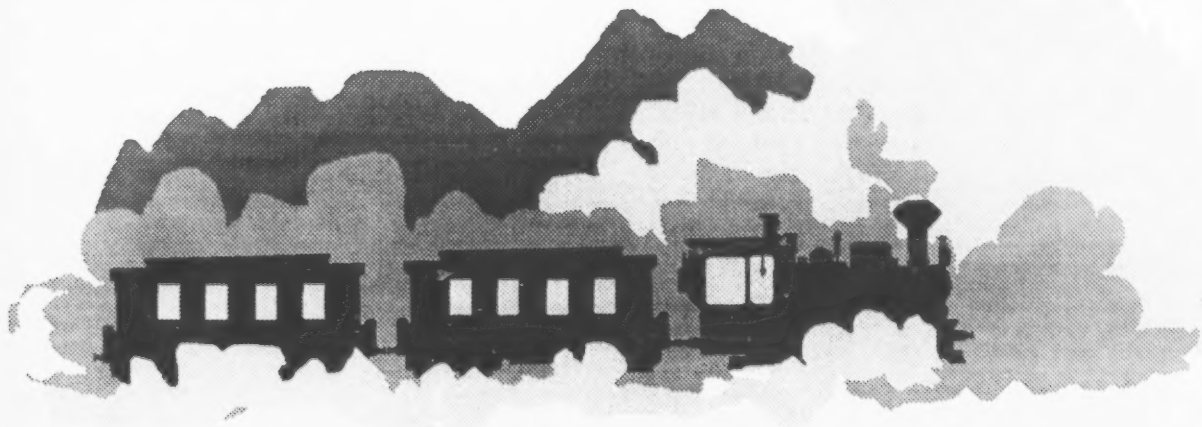
Finally the day arrived. All of us had to go through customs in Quebec and the trains were waiting to drive us to our destinations. All along the railroad tracks I saw wooden houses, little shacks with hardly any gardens. It was all very wild and it didn't look anything like what I had hoped for. My stomach turned and I had a sick feeling all over me.

My thoughts were, why did I leave home for this? Right then, I started to get homesick. At home we all had

brick houses. Some were very old and big. Many of the sounds around me now were strange and I missed the familiar voices of my friends. I couldn't go back now, I told myself. This is what I wanted and now is the time to grow up and face the consequences.

The train drove through the mountains along the Great Lakes and over prairies. We seldom saw a city, town or village as our train passed through the countryside. I had a feeling that I was in an empty country. The train ride lasted four days and on the twenty-fourth of September 1958, in the afternoon, I stepped off the train and into the cold and a heavy snowfall.

The same odd feeling which I had known the day that I had left the ship and that I had seeing the small houses and the little wooden shacks, came over me and I asked myself over and over again if I had done the right thing. When I stepped off the train I saw my friend and his brother waiting for me. They both looked quite nice and later on, my friend told me that his first words were, "There, brother dear, is your 170 pound lady."



THE LAST TIME

Gary Pharness

Two important outcomes arise from the writing process which are often passed over because they are not identified within curriculum guides. They are the writers discovering their personal writing voice which, in every instance, is the most dramatic step toward

becoming literate; and, the writers, through writing, giving voice to their past, present, and future. The following story "The Last Time My Father Belted Me", written by Mary, an adult literacy student, is an example in which both these elements are at work.

Early Saturday morning I woke up with a splitting headache; also tears on my cheeks and pillow. I had been crying. Why? I just relived a memory. I have to write this memory down on paper and then maybe, just maybe the pain will go. This story is about the last day my father belted me.

I was 10 or 11 at the time and it must have been a Saturday as my father was home that day. I cannot remember the reason he belted me, only the action, pain, shame and humiliation.

He grabbed me away from the dining room and took me down the hallway to the bedroom. I can still remember the pain, in my arms as his fingers dug into my upper arm. In the bedroom he told me to take my panties off. It never occurred to me to disobey him. As he slowly took off his belt he said, "This will hurt me more than you." He always said this before the act. Why? After the

first three hits something in my head snapped and told me not to cry. I will not scream or dance around. I will do nothing. Blank it all out. Two more slaps on the bottom with his belt and still I didn't cry or call out.

Dad said, "Tough guy, eh!"

The next slap was just a few inches down on the thighs. Still I didn't cry. The next two or three, and I couldn't think by this time, sore across the back of the knees. I almost screamed but I wouldn't give him the pleasure to see me in pain. My bottom, thigh, and knees were the colour of a ripe tomato as he hit me one last time "for good measure" he said.

Why did my mind tell me not to cry, I do not know. All I know is I had endless days, months and years that I could not cry. Not only cry, I forgot how to laugh and sneeze. "How?" you may ask? I do not know. That day I changed into a cool unfeeling person.

This story does not seem to conform with what teachers commonly receive from literacy learners. One crucial factor, possibly underlying all else, is the writer's unrelenting honesty about an event resurrected from the psychological and physical past.

And, although writing about a bad time in her life, the writer, by being completely honest, validates the integrity of the piece.

This honesty—this directness of expression—stands

out in the writing, and almost immediately prompts the question: How did Mary write about this event for a teacher? The answer is, she did not write it for a teacher; she wrote it for herself.

Many ABE/Literacy writing programs tend to yield to conventional thinking when it comes to choosing teaching methodologies. Why these programs seemingly give so little time and thought to how learners can best learn to write is a perplexing question. For example,

THEORY PRACTICE

programs which build the writing component of literacy on the misconception that writing, and by association a writer, always begins by carefully selecting a topic, moving on to restricting that topic, assigning a purpose for the writing, then organizing material around a rough outline. Whatever the rationale, it contributes to the failure of learners to achieve literacy. No learner who passes through the succession of negative experiences inherent in this methodology emerges truly understanding language.

Imagine yourself in a literacy class; it is your first day. The instructor is focusing on the skill you will learn if you are diligent. His talk takes you back into the wearisome world of meaningless grammar exercises, the stodgy and shopworn phrases of the language arts curriculum, and ultimately, you find you are back in the English classroom. But, you want and need these skills. So imagine the instructor asking you about your needs as a learner. He is patient. He does not answer for you. He realizes your thoughts are formulating. He waits. Together you and the instructor enter into a dialogue.

During this initial establishing of dialogue between the instructor and learner, the literacy learner must first hear his or her own voice.

The typical assigned-topic writing exercise reveals a falseness in the writer's voice, and a noticeable disjointedness throughout the writing. A topic obviously not right for a particular learner encourages the learner to fake it, thereby forfeiting a chance to discover his or her own voice, and of giving voice to his/her past, present and future. In such a topic writing exercise, the learner skips the psychological realities—the *personal subjectiveness*—already clearly at work within the learner before pen is taken to hand and paper is set out on the desk.

Contrary to the conventional writing methodologies present in most ABE/literacy programs, authentic writing often begins much more haphazardly—in some instances, irrationally. And, once focussed on this approach, learners become committed to writing.

Mary wrote her story after waking from a dream and going outside to work in her garden. Unable to work

because images from the dream kept returning, she went back into the house, sat down at the kitchen table and began to write. All the while she wrote she felt tears running down her cheeks.

This episode illustrates how genuine writing is unlike contrived writing, which by its very nature creates dependencies and promotes regimentation. In this instance, authentic writing began when the learner confronted the complexity of her world with honest intellectual analysis at her particular level of writing skill. To write honestly, Mary had to trust herself; she nurtured this trust by collaborating with herself. She has done what she can to help herself grow through writing. She has accomplished this by understanding that her only obligation in the writing process is one of being honest to herself, and with this idea firmly rooted in her mind she felt no need to satisfy anyone else. Mary had the powerful experience of remembering an event which she felt to be useful purely for the sake of the personal growth she might derive from it. Writing her experience has given her emotional strength and she is now prepared for further discoveries in the writing process.

In summary then, more than not, Mary's story demonstrates how learners are susceptible to learning from writing that originates with self, and how their voices develop from the inward search to give meaning to experience. This process emphasizes the destructiveness to learners who, unable to discover their voice, falsify experiences to satisfy curriculum requirements and, thereby, are denied the first step toward literacy.

As instructors in literacy programs, it seems incumbent upon us to provide learners with methodologies sensitive to, and appreciative of, the learners. Unfortunately, when we fail to find our own voices as literacy instructors, when we have not examined our own experience, or simply borrow from existing methodologies, we miss the opportunity to assist learners through the wonders of language, and to show how language breathes life, with voice, into their experience.

**"She didn't
write it for a
teacher; she
wrote it for
herself."**

CONTRIBUTORS

PREVIOUS CONTRIBUTORS

The following writers all appeared in the first issue of **Voices**, and biographical notes for them are included in that issue:

NICOLINA AMATO
ANNA ARMIT
SONIA BARTEK
HARRY BUTTERFIELD
ROSA CISZEK
LINDA DERKSEN
HAROLD "BUD" GAUNT

RON GODDARD
HEDY KRENTZ
JILL KRISTOFFERSON
MARK MCCUE
HONG NGO
GARY PHARNESS
LEE WEINSTEIN
JEAN WRIGHT

NEW CONTRIBUTORS

ANDREA attended Adult Basic Education classes through Douglas College, New Westminster.

A.P. A building trades worker who until recently did not see himself as either a reader or a writer.

LISA BANKS I was afraid to come back to school because I was always put down. They made me feel I couldn't do anything. I'm glad I came back to school because I know now that I can do lots of things.

JOE BEATTY Joe attended Adult Basic Education classes at Malaspina College, Vancouver Island.

JOANNE CAMPBELL I am eighteen years old. I came to Invergarry to improve my writing and my math so I can get a decent job. I enjoy coming here because you can ask about anything without feeling like you are going to be put down.

MARIE DECEMBER Marie takes adult education courses at Invergarry.

MILA EISNER When I came to Canada 6 years ago I could not speak, read or write English at all. At Invergarry Learning Centre I was encouraged by my teacher to read my first English book, which I read with a pleasure. Quite soon I became more confident in speaking with people. Knowing I have a place to come for help with my written work, which I need for my daily life, is very important to me as well.

SONIA ELMADANI In her writing, Sonia has explored romantic old Vienna, rediscovered her lost childhood and expressed many feelings. Sonia works as a seamstress.

LILIAN FIELD Lilian was a participant in the original creative writing course at Invergarry.

JUDY HARTLE I am the mother of two. I came back to school to improve my reading, spelling and writing. I don't find writing so hard anymore.

I.P. I came to Canada with my husband. I did not know anything about English, and for many years I was too afraid to learn. Finally I learned to speak better and then I taught myself to read English. Now I am learning to write.

JENNIFER My name is Jennifer. I am sixteen years old. I have been at Invergarry Learning Centre for six months. Since I have been working in Mark's class I have improved so much. I hope to get my Grade eleven or twelve and from there get a good paying job.

J.M. I came back to school because I am getting more responsibility at the plant and my reading and writing were causing problems for me.

ARCHIE JOE I am attending school at Malaspina College and taking ABE English. Since I started I've been feeling real good about myself. Now I can read a lot better and write a little better after I started school.

JOYCE Joyce was a literacy student at Invergarry for one year.

BERNIE VAN KEULEN Bernie attends literacy sessions twice weekly. A dairy farmer, he came to literacy to learn how to read the sports pages. He has achieved this goal, but continues coming to class.

HELMUT A. KRAFT I always admired all the people that could express themselves on paper. All my life I had ambitions to write in English but my knowledge was too little to do so. The Invergarry Centre and their teachers guided me, and helped me to lose my inhibitions. I am glad I have fulfilled my life's dream.

ROY LOGAN Roy was at Invergarry for two years.

JUDITH MASSINGHAM attended Adult Basic Education classes at Malaspina College, Vancouver Island.

JAMES D. MCKOEN I have a learning disability. I am 25 years old. This school helped me in many ways in my English, and now I have Grade 10 math.

RUBY An adult education student, working toward Grade 12 completion. She enjoys family and learning.

SHAHIN Shahin came to Invergarry to improve her English skills in order to get into a nursing course, and is now in the nursing program at a community college.

SHERRY Sherry is a young mother with a bright and active mind, but she lacks confidence in her ability to express herself. She doesn't speak in a group or write letters, because she is afraid she will make mistakes. Sherry came back to school because she doesn't want her kids living with these same fears.

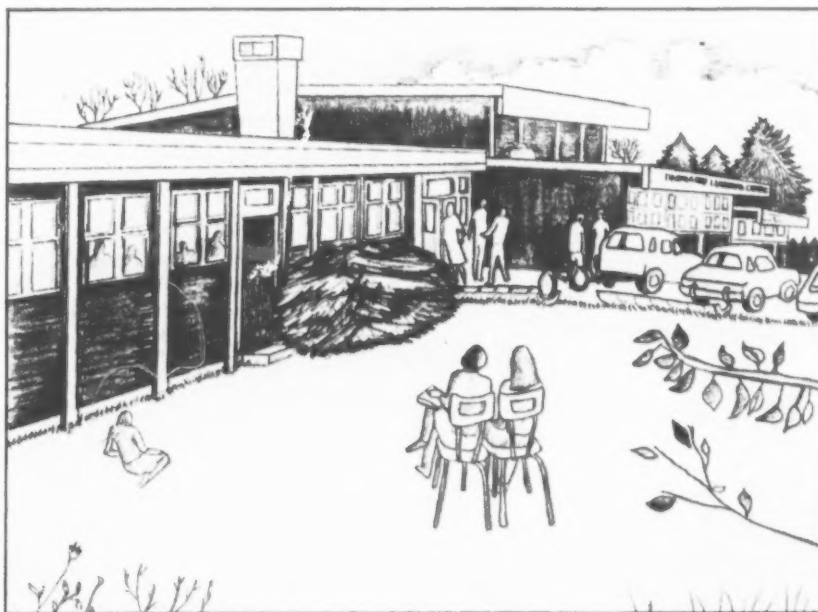
EDITH TAYLOR Edith has been attending adult upgrading courses at Invergarry for the past six months. In that time she has discovered an interest in reading and has bought her own books for the first time in her life.

TOBY TAYLOR Toby was a beginning reader who had never written prior to his enrolling in the Deberry Literacy Program in Nashville, Tennessee in 1981. After making great strides in his 6 months in the course, Toby was then unexpectedly transferred to another institution which did not have a literacy program.

DAVID THOMAS I work as a painter. I came here because I wanted to be able to read to my kids. I like reading and writing because I like to use my imagination.

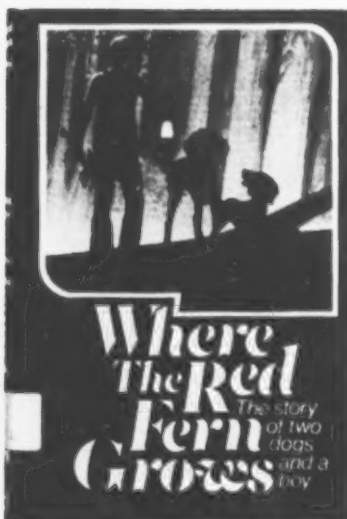
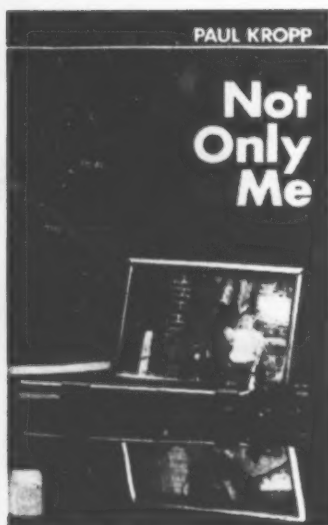
JENNIFER WISHINSKI Jennifer truly loves language. While attending literacy classes, Jennifer completed a light industry and warehouse training program for women in non-traditional jobs.

KATHY YACIW I found I really enjoy writing. It's great to express yourself and see that others enjoy what you write.



Invergarry Learning Centre

Illustration: Pippa Smyth



REVIEWS

NOT ONLY ME

PAUL KROPP

What this book is about is Chrissie and how her stepfather sexually abused her when she was nine. What I didn't like about it is that Chrissie's stepfather began to sexually abuse Chrissie when her sister, Lynn moved out. Lynn was sexually abused since she was eleven. Chrissie and Lynn didn't know how to tell their mother because they were afraid if they had told her she would call them liars. Lynn went to her roommate, Tanya, and Tanya said, "Go tell your mom." Lynn was scared to open up, but the girls got the help they needed. What I did like about the book is that they got help and they were relieved about it. Also, Chrissie and Lynn and the mother are happy too.

—Joanne Campbell

THE CRIMSON FLAME

FRANKLIN W. DIXON

I have just finished a book called the Crimson Flame. It is one of many Hardy Boys books. It is about how the Hardy Boys saved a rancher from being mugged, killed and having the ruby he had found, stolen. In the end they catch the crooks and solve the case. If you like murder mysteries you will like this Hardy Boys adventure.

—Harold "Bud" Gaunt

WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS

WILSON RAWLS

This story is about a boy named Billy who lives in the Ozark hills of Oklahoma. Billy had a really close friendship with his hunting dogs. Billy became very independent. There is a lot of adventure, love, happiness, and sorrow in this book. It is a book dog lovers would enjoy reading.

—Linda Doerksen

REVIEWS

THE FRENCH RESISTANCE

DON LAWSON

Right now I have just finished reading the story of the French Resistance in World War Two and all the things they did to the Germans before the invasion. If you like war stories you will like this one, because it has a lot of action in it.

—Harold "Bud" Gaunt

MIDNIGHT EXPRESS

BILLY HAYES AND WILLIAM HOFFER

I recommend this book because it is a true story about a guy who gets arrested for drug smuggling in Turkey. This book gives more details than the movie on how mixed up Turkish law is, and on how he lived and escaped.

—Edith Taylor

MY NAME IS PAULA POPOVICH

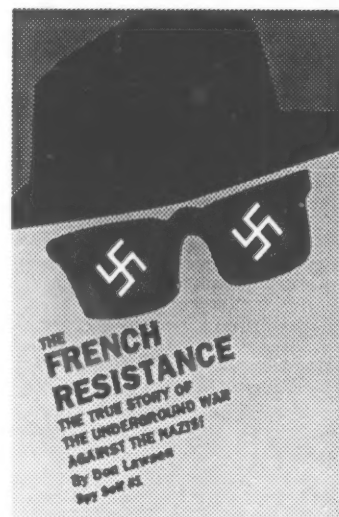
MONICA HUGHES

The book **Paula Popovich** is the tender episode of the young girl, Paula, who wants to discover the mystery in her family. It all started because of her Ukrainian surname and her mother's German background. The absence of her father was a mystery but all this was explained by her newfound grandmother. Her fate, confusions, problems and her new friendships are described very sensitively, and the subject will be familiar to all readers, who can remember the confusions of their younger years.

—Mila Eisner

Acknowledgements

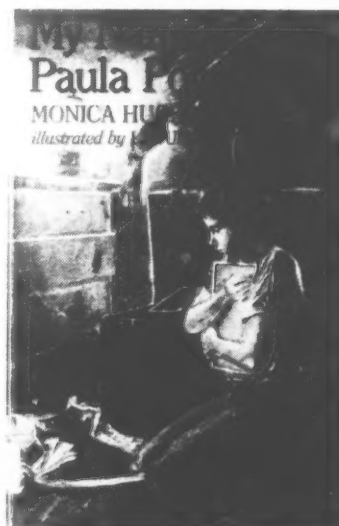
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OVER 1,000,000 COPIES IN PRINT
A true story of tension and horror
and incredible courage to survive!



by BILLY HAYES with William Hoffer



Voices

New Writers for New Readers

The magazine written by, and for, learners!

Voices has something for all learning readers and writers, ranging from the beginner to the more advanced. This quarterly magazine also contains a section specifically designed to instruct, motivate and offer support for the writing process. And each issue features an essay sharing the experiences, ideas and views of instructors and administrators.

Here are just a few of the many comments we have received following publication of the first issue of **Voices**:

"**Voices** is a beautiful magazine; very moving. This is what it means to be able to read the world and write down one's own world—that is, one's own reality."

- *Jonathan Kozol*, author of **Illiterate America**

"I was impressed by its content and the way that content was used to make instructional comments."

- *Rosalyn Alexander*, Open Learning Association, British Columbia

"The writings are a good example of the successful use of adult language experience methods, and are a reflection of the ideas, values and concerns of adult learners."

- *Maureen Butler*, Coordinator of Literacy Programing, Yukon Literacy Council

"I have personally subscribed in my role as a literacy teacher and have found **Voices** a valuable supplement."

- *Stephanie Martin*, Washington Coalition for Adult Literacy

"I found it an interesting, well-organized publication—most appealing to new readers."

- *Darcy Bower*, Mature Student Centre, Brandon University

"It's a fascinating project, and I read it from cover to cover, aware above all else that these were people who had essentially made the same discovery any writer makes—the glory of words, the ability to say what you mean."

- *Leonard Kriegel*, Director, Center for Worker Education, City College, NYC

"**Voices** is an excellent magazine—one that validates the learners' experience and invites enthusiasm and promise for other beginning adult readers."

- *Cindy Onstad*, Head of Basic Education Dep't., Vancouver Community College

Subscribe to Voices now and be certain not to miss a single issue!

\$3.00

Voices

New Writers for New Readers

Volume 1, Number 3

Spring 1989

**Francisco and
Julia Chavez**

I remember when I came to
Canada I didn't speak English, and
in my mind I brought many
memories of my family and my
friends.

—JULIA CHAVEZ

I have a need to learn the
pronunciation of the new words
today, to speak better, and
understand more.

—FRANCISCO CHAVEZ

FORWARD

ABOUT THIS

MAGAZINE

Ah, the third issue of *Voices*—more beautiful than ever. And who'd have thought it possible? We give thanks as a staff to fund-raising Casino nights, voodoo financing, our subscribers and the Government of Canada, though not necessarily in that order.

Let's face it—it's an expensive endeavour to publish a magazine of this calibre. Look at the facts: we use top photographers, employ a legion of illustrators, and don't have advertising revenue—all in a theory-based, student-written magazine. Unlike most commercial magazines, which rely heavily on advertising, the mainstay of *Voices* is its subscribers.

But more importantly, the third issue is done and is in your hands. We've continued to tinker a bit and have slightly modified the format.

Along with telling you about these changes, it is a good time to acknowledge certain debts of gratitude.

Voices is at least temporarily losing its managing editor, Calvin Wharton. To fully appreciate what this means, take four full-time teachers who help promote and put together the magazine in their off-hours, and subtract someone who knows layout, design, copy-editing and the meaning of the word *deadline*. We are going to miss Calvin's leadership and dedication. (Thank God he's not sick or something...I mean he's got his health and isn't that the most important thing?)

The second acknowledgment is to Ann Yow, our photographer. We were given Ann's name eight months ago by a fellow National

Geographic photographer. Our notion at the time was that we wanted Diane Arbus without the cruelty. We got much more. Ann has consistently captured the humanity and dignity of our writers. As *Voices* has evolved we have learned to better use her work to enhance the power of the stories by increasing the size of the photos and expanding to full-page spreads. We feel this issue offers the best example yet of how a classroom resource can be practical, instructive, useful, and beautiful at the same time.

We also are introducing a new dimension to Work/Notes. This involves the recognition that to write about writing requires more than the space previously allowed in this section of *Voices*.

Consequently, we asked Gary Phamess to write an in-depth piece analyzing a story. What Gary came up with is "Hands"—an exciting examination of two provocative, yet profoundly different stories.

Finally, our Theory/Practice section has a new twist. We are reprinting an article from the *Journal of Reading* by Dr. Henry Amoroso.

We feel very close to this article as it is an interview by one of our editors with Toby Taylor. Toby was a new reader at the time this article was written. It is a direct and clear account of a person becoming a reader and writer. *Voices* feels additionally connected to this piece since we have published Toby's work in issue #2.

The only way we can determine if the evolution of *Voices* continues to meet the needs of our readers is if you let us know. Plus, we would love to start a "Letter to the Editor" section.

Thanks again for your support. ■

**"The mainstay
of *Voices*
is its
subscribers."**

Voices

New Writers for New Readers

Volume 1, Number3 Spring 1989



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The policy of Voices is to keep intact the original manuscript style of works by new writers.

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Acknowledgement: The interview on page 35 is reprinted from the Journal of Reading by permission of the author.



Clash...

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The Restaurant...

P. 3

Cover photo of Francisco and Julia Chavez By Ann E. Yow

NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS

The Restaurant

GREGORY SCOTT GRANT

I had dinner at the restaurant last Thursday night. There were four people at the restaurant. What I had for dinner was wonton soup and some lemon chicken. Janet was amazed how much food I ate at the restaurant. I ate like a horse, and found I had the appetite of a donkey. I wouldn't touch the washroom with a ten foot pole because it looked like a pig farm.



Message to My Father

JAMES AKER

It has been a long time since I have thought about you, but going back to a class for the purpose of getting a better understanding about reading and spelling reminds me of the things you used to tell me about getting a better education. I feel that you would be proud of me for trying to improve myself this way; and, who knows where it will go? I may become an engineer of some kind.

You always had so much good advice but I did not use it very well. But, lately I have been trying to put more of it in use.

Glasses

ALMA NEWMAN

Our eyesight was never tested at school. I had a terrible time in school and also while walking or riding my bike. I couldn't see signs properly and in school I had problems seeing the blackboard. After I started driving the car, I couldn't imagine how I learned to drive. Luckily there wasn't all the traffic there is today.

I don't know if I would have passed my driving test now. My teacher often said that she thought that I squinted too much, but I was never sent to an optician. My parents thought that as long as we could see we shouldn't have glasses. They thought people would look down on us and make fun of us. It was really too bad. It affected my learning very much, I had burning eyes many times, especially when I had to do a lot of reading.

Memories

DAPHNE GEORGE

There is a little village outside of Prince Rupert called Port Simpson. I stayed there for about a year. It's a very small village and has only one store and one cafe. We would go into town once or twice to go shopping, but we would have to catch a small plane. It took us 15 to 18 minutes to get into town by plane. We could go by boat, but that took longer.

Every time we went into town we would stay for the weekend. It always, always rains in Prince Rupert and Simpson! I never really did like it there and I was glad when Ted, my ex-husband, quit his job as a logger. It was a good paying job, but he said his boss was too ugly and always mad. Every day when he got home from work, he'd talk about his boss. Every guy that worked there wanted to beat him up!

When he was working, I was babysitting. I didn't make much, but at least I was making money. I only sat for children two years and older. The only thing I miss over in Port Simpson was the long, long walks we used to take along the beach. Before we left for our walks, we would take a lunch. We'd be gone all afternoon and be back in time for supper. I really liked the trails. If we didn't go into town we would go for a walk up there. I don't think I will ever go back there, not even for a visit.



When We Met

LISA BANKS

When I met you
I liked you
When I liked you
I loved you
When I loved you
I let you
When I let you
I lost you
I cried for you
When I cried for you
I forgave you.

Unforgettable Incident

GURDISH SRAN

It was a long time ago when I was in my boarding school in India. There was a remembrance day for the lady who had built the College. For three days, prayers had been going on. On the last day, a funny thing happened. When all the college girls sat together in the prayer hall, it became too hot. So all the ceiling fans and extra table fans were turned on. A group of singers sang hymns. Everybody was quiet and listened to them. Suddenly a girl screamed! She caught her scarf in the table fan (this we found out later). Other girls thought maybe she had seen a ghost of the lady! One by one every girl screamed and ran out of the doors. There were six hundred girls in that hall. There were eight doors. Every girl in the hall ran out. They ran so fast some of them fell on the ground and others walked over them. The singers announced, "Be calm. Be quiet." Nobody listened to them. When the hall was empty, our professors found out the reason for the scream. They again tried to call the girls back. Some girls went back and some didn't. For weeks this incident was a laughing matter in every classroom.

Abner

MARIA CERRATO

This is a true story about my second son. When he was a baby, he was a strong baby. Also, he was an active baby. He had to sleep with us in our bed. One day we had to make a decision about putting him in a cradle. It was when he was 7 months old. One night he crawled out of the cradle, and he came into my bed, but we were sleeping and didn't know. In the middle of the night my husband felt something moving in the bed. He thought it was a snake because he only saw the head and black hair. He told me not to move. He woke up fast and took a hard tube to kill the supposed snake. But when he was ready to kill the snake, I turned the lights on, and I saw that it was my son. I said, "Don't kill him because it is not a snake, it is Abner." I thank God that I thought about turning the lights on.

Vancouver Island

AUDREY RASSMUSSEN

I lived with my mother and father and two sisters; my dad was a coal miner in Cumberland.

My grandparents lived in Northfield. They had a chicken farm. They sold the eggs and chickens for a living in the town. They worked hard on the farm.

My grandmother had to wash the clothes in the wash tub with a scrub board. My sisters and I fed the chickens and gathered eggs and helped pluck the chickens.

My grandmother and grandpa had no electricity. They had oil lamps to see with. My grandfather had an old-fashioned car. I think it was a Model T. I got a ride in it every Friday when we went to deliver eggs.

We walked to the beach. When we were there Grandma always made the meal to take to the beach and Grandpa brought it down and had supper at the beach with us. These times were happy times and lots of memories.

When I was a little girl I lived in Cumberland with

one older sister and one younger. I went to school in the town until I was seven.

Victoria is not very far from Cumberland. I always wanted to go there for a visit, but did not get a chance.

In Victoria there are beautiful gardens with flowers of all colours. There is a big museum with a bell tower. I know the government buildings are there, and lots of fancy houses and lots of stores.

I would like to see the killer whales at Oak Bay Sea World, and the telescope in Saanich and all the flowers in the Butchard Gardens. I would like to see the Wax Museum.

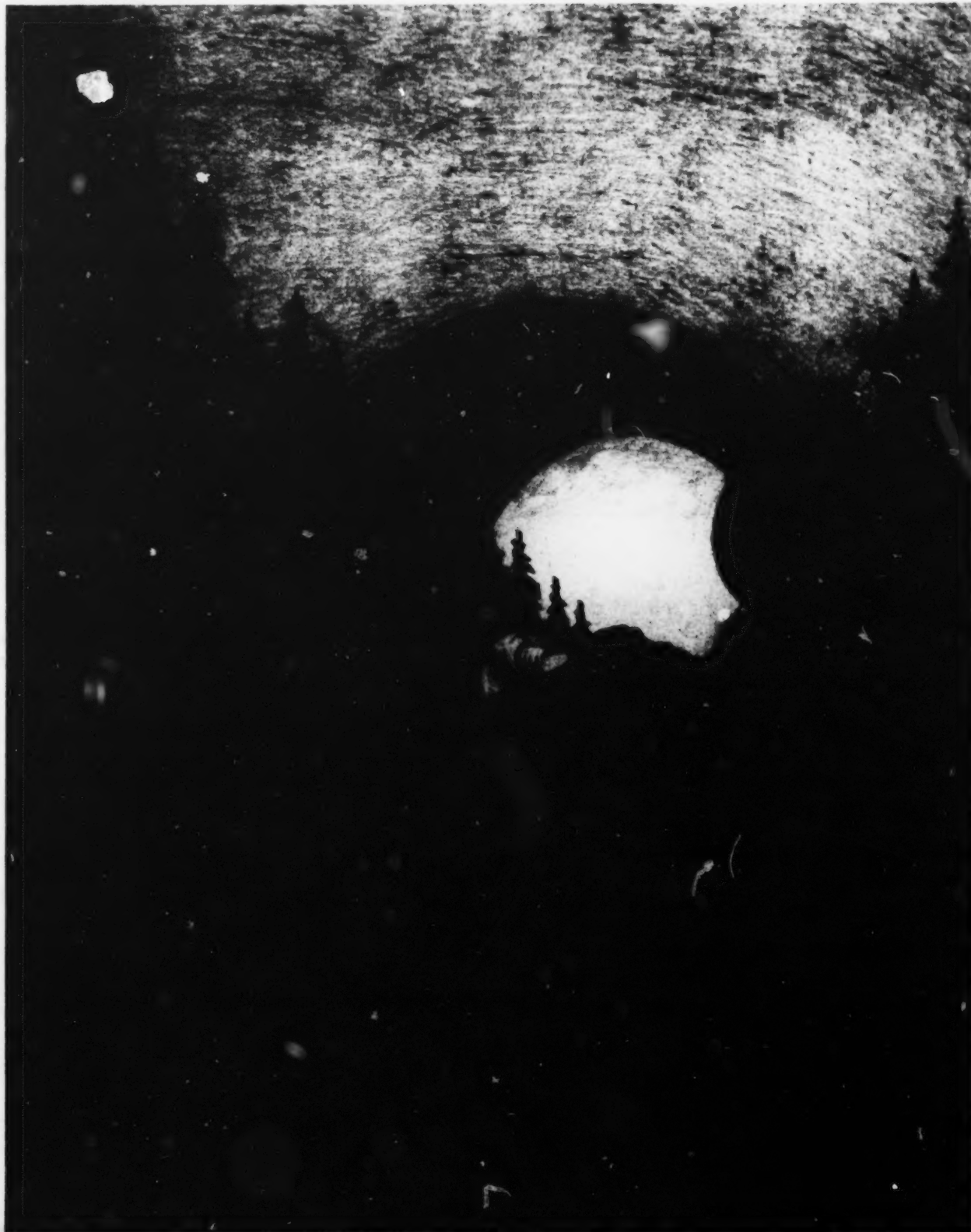
The most fun of all would be to take a ride on the double-decker bus and to take a ferry over and spend the day sightseeing.

I hope someday my dream will come true. Someday in the future.

NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS

Illustration: Jaxon



Pipeline

JACK HUTCHISON

Well, I don't know what to write about tonight, so I'll just put down whatever comes out.

You know I don't understand if a person can't spell well and has a hard time to remember how he can pick up spelling.

From the first day I started school I had problems. I can't even sound out a word.

When I first started school I couldn't speak. It was hard in school because kids and sometimes even my teacher would make fun out of me. I could finally say my last name when I was around 10 or 11 years old. I had seven major operations on my mouth when I was young to try to help me be able to speak and also to help me look better than what I was born like.

When I was young and in school I never was able to get to have friends because we used to move on the average of 35 to 40 times in one year. We used to live by the pipeline and move along with it. It always seemed I would just be starting something in a school and there we would be moved again. I even had a hard time to try to learn my alphabet.

A lot of times my mom would be my teacher, and when she was, all hell would break loose. If I couldn't do something I wouldn't get help, but a real good beating. I remember one time I was about six years old and she left me alone in a log cabin in the bush while she went out somewhere. When she came back I was hidden under a bed because a bear came in the cabin and it scared me half to death. When she found me she was very angry at me for being under

the bed, so she took this butcher knife out and put my hand down and cut all my fingers for being bad and hiding.

I left home when I was 12 years old. I lived on a farm in Ontario and I worked for my room and board. A few times I tried to go to school and learn but I found it very hard to do.

When I was about 14 years old I became very sick and one night I went into a coma; I was in the hospital 3 to 4 months before I came to and I found I lost so much of my memory.

I guess it was just about 8 to 12 months before I could walk again on my own.

The night before this happened I was at my mom's house and I fell to the floor. That's when I went into a coma. My sister was there at the time with her boyfriend and told my mom that she should take me into the hospital, but my mom said, "no", that I would be alright. Finally my sister got mad at my mom and told her that if she wouldn't take me in, that she and her boyfriend would. When I got to the hospital the doctor said I would have died right away if the poison in my brain broke, and he told my family I would have died in about 20 minutes time if I wasn't brought in.

But you know all the hurt and hate to me is water under the bridge. I forgive my family for any reasons they had in the past. I guess I can still say I love my family.

From Peru to Canada

JULIA CHAVEZ

I remember when I came to Canada I didn't speak English, and in my mind I brought many memories of my family and my friends, who remained in my country Peru.

I remember every moment of different times: When my children were very little; when we drove every year to different provinces of my country in the summer. Sometimes I drove with friends. Now I have pictures to remember.

The two friends I remember most are Norma and her family, and Martha and her family. Norma and Martha are the godmothers of my youngest daughter. Norma was a physical education teacher but now she works teaching the painting of cloth fabrics, and works in her home, too. With her, I drove many times to different places in my country.

For Expo, she flew to different countries. Her husband was a teacher in the military school, Leoncio Prado. She has three children; Norma is a good mother, a good wife and a good grandmother.

My other friend, Martha, is a lawyer's clerk; she has worked in the Palace of Justice for many years. She has three children, too. Her husband also taught in the military school Leoncio Prado...

Also my family all remained in Peru, every brother and every sister.

I remember too when our parents lived. When my mother died, we all stayed together in the family house.

After a while, little by little every one got married. Afterwards, I remember everyone was with his or her family.

The last thing I think about is my flight to Canada. At first when we came to Canada, we were nervous, because the people spoke a language we did not understand. My husband wanted to learn English in school and I, too, wanted to learn to speak. But at first we couldn't since we came in May, and the school closed its doors in June.

We couldn't study anywhere until September. One friend of my son-in-law spoke to us about coming to Invergarry School. We came and spoke nothing. Our first teacher was Jean. She had patience to teach us, and then after one year we went into the literacy classroom with the teachers: Lee, Mark, Yom, Gary, Sheila and other teachers. They have helped us much.

Now we understand, read and write a little. Thank-you teachers, thank-you very much.

Also I remember the first year we were invited to a Church which had many people from different countries who just spoke English. I didn't understand anything, but one Canadian lady invited me to come again. I went every month and little by little I learned to speak. Now I am going every month. The group is bigger and I have friends, and speak English.

NEW WRITERS

FIRST WORDS

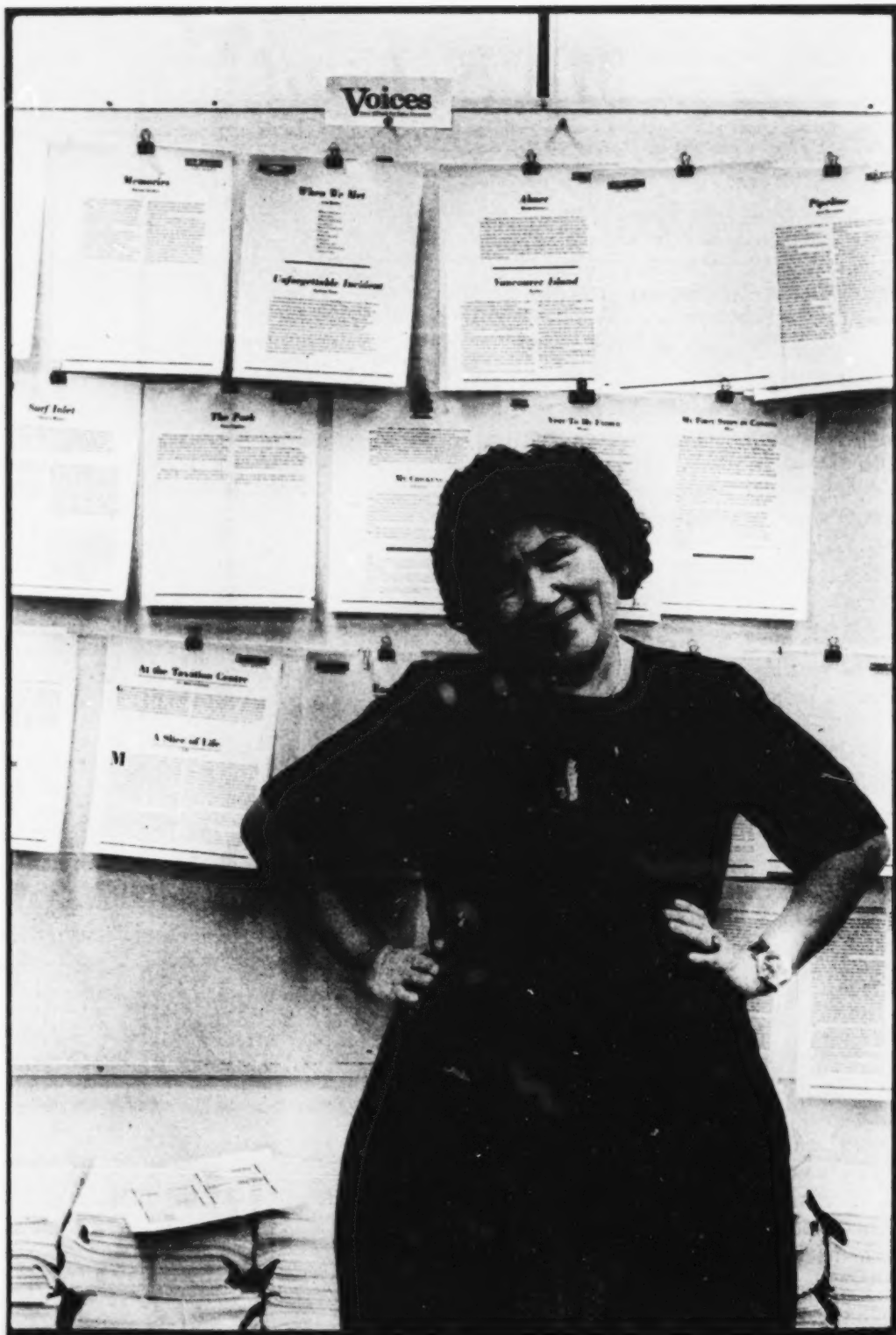


Photo: Ann E. Yow

My School

FRANCISCO CHAVEZ

Yesterday I did not come to school because I felt bad. I got up and told my wife. She said to me, "If you feel bad it is better that you stay home. You will go when you feel better." In the morning I got up at 6:00 o'clock as usual. Then I was thinking about coming to school. Then I said, "It is proper that I go to school."

I ate a light breakfast and decided to come to school. My wife and I went outside, we took the car and drove toward the school. I have a need to learn the pronunciation of the new words today, to speak better, and understand more.

The first day I went to Invergarry school I woke up very nervous because I could not speak English and did not want to go. I thought people will not understand and will laugh at me.

I wanted to stay home, but I wanted to learn English. I ate a bit of breakfast then I felt better. I decided to go.

When I arrived in the school I was surprised. All the students were very friendly and helpful and asked questions about my country. At coffee break someone got me a cup of coffee. Outside the school they said "See you tomorrow."

Yesterday when I left the school I went to the store in Guildford. There my wife parked her car and we went inside the mall. We walked on the first floor and saw many things. We bought some things. Then we walked all around. Later we went out and met with my daughter. Again we went inside the mall up to the second floor. I had a cup of coffee and a piece of cake then we went back home.



Photo: Ann E. Yow

Prince Rupert

GEORGE MOODY

When I was about five years old I was put in a boarding school for a short time. I can still remember this time. We each had a tiny, tiny shelf to keep our things in one place. I thought someone would take mine. We were put to bed so early I often wet the bed, for which I was spanked. I hated to take a bath; we were all put together in huge tubs where everyone could see. I was so embarrassed.

The school was on an island; one night my mother came out in a boat and stole me away. What a grand night that was!



Surf Inlet

GEORGE MOODY

For two years I drove as a motor man in a mine. Ore and waste out, steel and powder-tie in. An old cat lived in the mine; his eyes shone in the headlights of the motor. We worked hard because jobs were hard to get. Safe working rules were unheard of. My good friend was sent in alone and his head was crushed. We were sent in to clean it up before the police came. I was sick. We worked in the rubble from the blasts. A man had his leg smashed and they took him out of the mine on the top of a pile of ore. The pay was poor but jobs were hard to find. There were about 150 men on the crew and not one grey head.

The mine was on an island and faced the west. The wind blew off the open Pacific Ocean and you would have to see it to believe the rain and wind. We lived in a house that the former owner used as a guest house.

We lived two to a room. I roomed with a man that was so tough, he was short but very strong. He had been a wrestler. One night when I came in I couldn't believe it, he was crying like a small boy. He had a letter from his wife in Vancouver telling him she was going to live with another man.

I was moved from the beach camp to the mine, the men were discontented and the camp was full of rumours. The war had started and the men were wondering what was coming next. We had a bull cook that was a German. Of course that was right down Jack's alley. He got his friend Bob and started looking for the bull cook.

It was evening and of course raining, when they started looking. Someone told the bull cook and he ran out in the bush, no hat, no coat—he just ran. Jack went up and down the camp; he and Bob found some vanilla and they went through the camp, up one side and down the next. There was not much sleeping in the camp that night. They looked in every room, sometimes two and three times. Next day to work with a thick head.

We were on the West Coast with all of its wind and rain. There were two animals I had never seen before. One was a white deer that lived only on the West Coast. He is small and looks very much like a white-tailed deer. One of them came right into camp one evening. He didn't seem to be too afraid as he was with several other deer. I couldn't get a picture of him. There was also a small white bear in the area.

Three of the men saw one and caught it without hurting it. They wanted to sell him to a park. The men had him on a chain. He would pretend to be asleep until he thought you were close, then he would jump and try to grab you. The Government made them let it go.

The valley was narrow and the walls steep. The wall so steep that you never saw much light. We lived at the fish camp where we could load and unload the boats. A fisherman came and stayed a few days. This was unusual but he had his wife with him, there were no other women in the camp. I thought it was funny that some of the men admired the fisherman's wife for going for a row each morning. Their boat was too small to have a bathroom and she was trying to get out of sight. We had a big dog at the camp; some of the men thought it was funny to give him a steel mill ball. He would push it around until his mouth and nose were bleeding. I used to take the ball away from him, much to his displeasure.

Remembering

PETER HARDER

When I was young I ran away from my father. I went to Stoney Lake. I visited there with my friends for three days. While I was there my father and mother were looking for me and they couldn't find me. One day they found me in a tent by the lake. The police came into the tent and warned me not to run away again. When I got home I got a good licking.

Many things are fun. I like to go to school. It is fun. I like to go to the beach. It is fun. I like to go to the park. It is fun. I like to ride on the bus. It is fun too.

Abe and I took the bus to Stanley Park. It is in Vancouver. It is a very nice park.

I went to the store in Langley. I walked from my home to the store. After I got home from the store I went for a walk. I talked to people on the street. They told me that it was going to rain the next day. Some people told me that it was going to snow. I thought that we would have a clear sky!

I like to work hard at school. I want to better my reading and writing. Mark will help me. I am glad to be at school.



WORK NOTES

HIS HANDS—LOVE'S TOUCH

LINDA CALAHAN

He has hands of a writer. They are graceful, beautiful and full with knowledge, and wisdom. There is poetry in those hands. They pulse with a life of their own. They have touched my whole being. I owe them; I will repay them with tender loving caresses; show them the gratitude I feel for being held by them, stroked by them, and for the strength offered me by them.

Against the pale, shadowy light the warm, amber oil drips to the palm of his hand. My fingers are already in motion. From another room the haunting, heavy refrain of Isaac Hayes singing "Walk on By" gives a slow, steady rhythm to my feathery, sensual movements as I explore and caress his hand. My fingers smooth the pink pillows of soft flesh that rest below his fingers. I drip more oil and watch it trickle into rivulets running down the creases of his palm. Lightly, I press the oil down into those destiny deciding life lines. Can I, dare I try to alter fate? I slowly rub around the base of each finger, lingering on the sensitive spot between each appendage. I hear a low moan; feel a slight tremble. I've touched the right place. I pull the oil from the palm up those straight unblemished fingers. Up and down, taking care to cover them in the sweet, musky oil. I slide my slippery fingers deep down into the V of his extended fingers, back and forth so smoothly, applying more pressure with each thrust. The feeling is electrifying for us both. Another moan. Was it myself or him?

Somewhere I hear Isaac chanting "Walk on By," as I raise his flaccid, relaxed hand to my lips. I feel a rush of love for this man as I gently kiss each fingertip softly, like a butterfly touching on a petal only to fly away, again. As I kiss the little finger I take it gently in my mouth surrounding it with a deep kiss.

Can he feel love flowing from my fingers as I slowly caress downward over his knuckles to the broadest part of his hand? It offers me a large area to express this love as the motion of my fingers again pick up the rhythm of the music.

As I work toward his wrist I take his hand—this soft, strong, hard working and unblemished hand, glistening in the dim light, the silky hairs on the back glowing as their oily surface catches the faint rays of candle light—in my two hands and examine it one last time. My eyes recognize the familiarity that comes from holding and being held by his hand for twenty-three years.

As I stroke it one last time and lay it down on the bed, Isaac squeezes out his last soulful plea to “Walk on By.” Should I give Isaac another spin? I think so, another graceful hand lies waiting.

MY HAND

BY BARINDER JOHAL

On Oct. the 9th my friends came from out of town. It was the Thanksgiving Holiday long weekend. We had so much fun on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday.

I went to work on Tuesday afternoon. We started working at three o'clock. We started work the way we usually do. I was working as a trimmer man. We worked there two hours with no problems. At half past five there was a twenty foot

long piece I was supposed to cut. First I cut six feet from that twenty foot length. After that I was supposed to cut an eight foot long piece. I was moving the piece with my hand up to the eight foot length when the air pressure cylinder that pushes the saw out broke. The saw got free then came out by itself and cut my hand completely off. I didn't know what had happened. When I looked I saw it in the conveyor. I saw my hand sitting there and I started yelling, then other workers heard me crying and they were wondering what had happened to me. Then they saw me holding my arm with no hand on it.

It was bad luck because there was no one with a first aid kit. They didn't even have a foreman there. I didn't know what to do. Then I told my friend who was working with me to take me to the hospital. I told the other guy to get my hand. I told him to get my hand because a few months before my accident a guy cut his two fingers off. They didn't take his fingers when they took him to the hospital. When they reached the hospital the doctors asked them where were the fingers. The doctors told them to get his fingers from the mill. Then they went back and it took them so long to come back in. By the time they came back it was too late. The doctors tried to put them back on, but it didn't work. This was the reason I told the guy to bring my hand.

Then I told my friend to get the car keys from my pocket. He got the keys and he told me to wait for a minute. I was thinking about what he was going to do. He brought an old shirt and told me to put it on my arm, otherwise he couldn't drive. He was very nervous. He started the car and put the emergency lights on. My friend was from Vancouver. He didn't know the way to Surrey Hospital, he told me. I showed him the way. We got there and we went to the emergency department. When the nurse saw my arm, she right away took me to the emergency room. Doctors put the bandage on my arm. I don't know what they did with my hand. I had so much pain. They told me they were going to take me to V.G.H. and they put me in the ambulance. I was

getting more pain. I asked the nurse if I could have some sleeping pills. She told me they were going to operate on my hand and they couldn't give me any medicine. At times I was thinking this was a bad dream, but I looked around and then I knew it was true. We reached the Vancouver hospital.

Doctors came up to me and told me they were going to try to put my hand back on. They put me to sleep. After that I don't know what happened.

Two days afterwards when I woke up I was in the recovery room. I saw my hand. It was attached on my arm. I was a little happy. I asked the nurse if my hand would stay on my arm. She said the chances are fifty-fifty. The doctor came on the third day and I asked him about my hand. He said, "We are about seventy-percent sure." Nurses were checking the temperature every two hours and comparing it with my normal hand. Every time they came I asked them about my hand. After a few days the doctors opened my cast and they told me they were sure my hand would stay on my arm.

I have good movement in my hand, but I have no feeling in my hand. I am very happy with it. I am very, very thankful to the doctors who did this great job on my hand. Especially I am thankful to Dr. Fitzpatrick and my physiotherapist, Grace.



The unexamined life, it has been said, is not worth living. Although associated with the contemplative existence, this idea especially rings true in the literacy classroom. It is in the full range of the language arts curriculum: reading, writing, listening and speaking—the environment which most nearly approximates ideal literacy learning

conditions—that literacy learners, for the first time, connect what is being read, written, heard or spoken to some aspect of their own lives.

However, and unfortunately, learners in most literacy programs are seldom provided with opportunities to examine their lives through the writing process because the primary thrust of such programs is mastery of specific skills or instructor-directed writing exercises. These two methodologies, although seemingly innocuous, establish writing practices which contradict writing for the purpose of examining one's life. Consequently, instructors must know that the methodology they select inevitably and irrevocably determines what learners achieve from their writing. Instructors who carelessly consider their choice of methodology must be prepared to receive reams of nonsense, lists of answers masquerading as writing, or worse yet, come to realize that in the interest of correct form, their learners have surrendered personal involvement in their writing, and in this process become dispossessed of their experiences.

This rather rigorous limitation instructors set for themselves, or their learners, tends to preclude risk-taking by either party. Such limitations drastically restrict learners' options for expanding their experiences or broadening their writing base.

Any penetrating interest in writing for the purpose of examining one's life draws both the writer and the reader to the notion of tone. Many understand its significance in writing and reading in the context of "tone of voice." In writing, tone enables the reader to see how writers' attitudes are manifested. Understandably tone is an integral part of meaning. Tone can only be inferred because you cannot state that the author actually held a certain attitude. The inferences from which we determine tone can result as much from our own attitudes as from those of the author. Most writing has a dominant tone. This is why one book or story is said to be sad while another is described as happy.

Tone is not always apparent to beginning readers, or, for that matter, experienced readers. It only becomes obvious to readers when they carefully read the text, and while doing so, listen attentively to the writer's voice. In listening to the writer's voice, they come to detect the tone. If readers fail to identify the writer's tone, then they miss the writer's meaning.

What I am trying to get across here is that the first act of reading for meaning is to establish firmly in the mind the dominant tone in the writing at hand. Another way of looking at tone is to think of it as the author's attitude toward subject or material. In other words, are writers sympathetic, or uninvolved, with the characters or content in their writing? Along with the writer's attitude toward the piece,

readers, in all fairness, must consider their own attitude toward the story.

The pieces, "My Hand" and "His Hands—Love's Touch" show how two writers examined life experiences.

Readers are immediately struck by the essentially personal nature of both pieces of writing, and understand that both writers view their material as important, clearly feel that what they have written is acceptable to their intended audience, are not inhibited by the self-revealing nature of their writing, and, therefore, do not exhibit the self-consciousness often found in much of the writing that originates outside of the writers' experience.

Both writers' styles reflect specific attitudes towards their subject matter. Each piece possesses an intensity and forcefulness seldom found in instructor-assigned writing.

With practice, readers can discover the ways in which writers express attitudes, and how these attitudes are manifested in a particular piece of writing. Good readers are also attentive, since reading in essence is an analysis of a writer's mind at work.

"His Hands—Love's Touch," is straightforward; however, sensitive readers will detect an underlying ambiguity in tone. Also, an underlying urgency seems present. These thoughts arise directly from the phrases, "Dare I ..." and "press love into those lines." Here the writer pauses to focus momentarily on some important issue related to her present reality: love may have gone wrong. Can her present actions revive it?

I should mention here that both writers achieve a concreteness of tone in their writing because, I think, they have tried to describe their respective experiences as intimately and accurately as their abilities allow. Let us say the writers inform their readers of their factual experience while at the time giving their readers a strong, firm and solid manifestation of love which in both stories controls readers' responses.

In "My Hand," Barinder's control of tone is evident. He tells us about an accident which happened one day in his life. Barinder speaks to us very matter-of-factly. He neither understates nor exaggerates the experience of which he is writing. He tells his story: suspended in time, Barinder observes the immediate terror of the experience, and in his writing shows incredible control of the violence of feeling. After all, a saw has taken his hand in the manner of a wild animal, or a mean dog. Throughout this passage Barinder's tone is restrained, direct and unambiguous. Had he lost control, Barinder's story would have resulted in an emotional display which would have left most readers feeling cheated, therefore, denied knowing Barinder's true feelings.

Both stories are told in a calm and orderly manner letting little emotion escape in the telling of the story. In "My Hand," Barinder subordinates his feelings toward his traumatic experience to a dispassionate attitude. This reflects a strong, practical sense, and the capacity to put emotion aside, so the mind can more readily accept the experience and cope as well as possible.

In contrast, Linda's attitude in, "His Hands—Love's Touch" reflects a stronger emotional involvement on the part of the writer with her material. She seems to wring a deeper pleasure from the experience than the sum experience would seem to indicate. The story she has written is absorbing because it does not distort reality or give us false concepts and false expectations. Her tone is, if anything, nurturing. She nurtures the experience, and by doing so, nurtures the reader with a story rich in tone.

Both stories give a faithful treatment of life, and since they do so, deserve to be taken seriously by the reader. The discriminating reader is treated to two kinds of knowledge in these two stories—experiential knowledge emotionally felt, as well as that understood by the mind.

After reading both pieces in class, I immediately wanted to interpret them; however, I realized that in providing clarification I would be limiting learners' opportunities for expanding their experience through writing. I understood how defining the work somehow restricts and limits what other writers can learn from a piece; therefore, I initiated a discussion about tone since any meaning it might have comes from the work itself, and as a tool for understanding, tone requires inferencing to establish meaning.

Knowing there are no easy rules by which one can recognize the tone of a work requires risk-taking, while to infer meaning from tone provides instructors and learners alike an opportunity to participate freely and enthusiastically in discussion. The central advantage of first having a discussion on tone is that it may bring readers and beginning writers closer to quickly understanding a work without imposing instructor-prescribed meaning. Also, discussion of tone tends to force a kind of coherence and unity on the work since most shorter works have a singularity of tone.

In considering all this, it is important to remember that a reader requires meaning from reading and writers require their work to have meaning; therefore, tone is a natural tool with which to initiate exploration of any written work.

TRANSITIONS

LATER WRITING

Rodeo

RUDY KLAWER

I am an amateur rodeo contestant who would like to put to bed some of the myths of animal abuse at rodeos. The animals of the rodeo belong to a contractor who may with other contractors supply the livestock to the rodeo contractor.

At one given rodeo there may be twenty contestants for each event. In the bull riding event, a bull will only have one rider a day and that lasts for only ten seconds. In all the other events this is the same: one animal, one run per day. To the animal this is the life of leisure, less than one minute of work per day and rodeo contractors must abide by SPCA bylaws. To prove that the animals live a good life, most horses are in their mid-teens to their late twenties.

The rodeo superstars of today will be the first to say that they are against animal cruelty. The animals of the rodeo are trained to perform. They do not do the movements because of pain which some people feel a cowboy forces on them.

The team roping event, which I am involved in, uses steers which weigh five hundred to six

hundred pounds. The steer is roped by one of the ropers around a set of plastic horns which are strapped onto the head. The steer is then turned away and a heel rope is thrown to catch the heels by the other roper. The steer

is held with tight ropes to the horn of the saddle; time is then stopped and the steer is released.

The horses which are used come from many places: rodeo stock farms, auction barns and people who have a family pet which has gone sour and will not let the children ride it. These horses are rounded up by the contractors and trained for a time. If the horse works out it is put in the rodeo string to make a lot of money for the contractor.

When an animal is hurt the best medicine is used to make sure the animal recovers quickly to be returned to the rodeo string and make more money for the contractor.

The rodeo is big business with millions of dollars in prize money and the same for sponsors. It has had its bad days of old, but has changed to become a sport of ladies and gentlemen.



Illustration: Elena Underhill

Holiday

RICHARD BROOKS

In September 1984 we left on our holiday. We were planning on going to Banff but only got as far as Merritt. On the first night we got as far as Manning Park and stayed there overnight. That night my wife started to complain about stomach pain; we thought it was just cramps but it turned out to be that she was going into labour. The pain went away the next day, so we went on to a place called Monk Park just outside of Merritt.

We got there about six o'clock at night. We had our supper, played some backgammon and had our tea and coffee. I just relaxed after the day of travelling and about 10:30 pm we went to bed. It was about half-an-hour later that she started to complain of cramps again.

They persisted for about another hour, getting worse all the time.

That was when I decided it was time to find a hospital, so we went back to Merritt where we found a hospital. We went into the emergency and the nurse asked us if my wife was pregnant. We didn't think so, but weren't sure. So she made an appointment for her to see a doctor the next morning. The next morning she saw the doctor, and to her surprise, he told her she was going to have a baby. He sent us back to the hospital at 2:30 pm and at about 4:44 that afternoon we had a baby boy, 6 lb. 1/2 ounce. I phoned the in-laws that night to tell them that they were grandparents.

We are growing

ROSE GRASSMANN

I am not like you!

You believe,
you can do it better.

You believe,
your thoughts
are much clearer.

You believe,
your decisions
make more sense.

You believe,
you do a much better job.

You have forgotten,
you are like me.

No, I am not like you.

Give yourself time
and one day
you will be there
and you will know
and you will say....

Oh, my god
I am like you.

At the Taxation Centre

JILL KRISTOPHERSON

Gary suggested I write about my work. It is very hard for me to do that as it sometimes is very boring and tiresome, however, today I thought of some of the little things that I do to stay sane. When I add up T36J's, spouse's transfers, I like to make the total add up in zeros etc. \$8,665,101.00 or \$88,000 When I come close to the end of my batch I will look through the rest of the

T36J's for one to make my zero total. Other times I will make them add up to 99 or 66 or 50. I play these games only by myself. One other thing I will do is put the batches of paper in a certain order, small pieces of paper in front, then bigger ones behind and so on until the end. It is always nice and neat this way, however, no one knows the difference but me. That's O.K. too.

A Slice of Life

C.G.

My biggest fears were while I was in Elementary School; my biggest problem was paying attention. I was afraid. Nearly everyone and everything affected me in a negative manner. I was chosen to be the one to pick on by other classmates about anything I did or didn't do. I was always afraid of the teacher asking me any kind of questions. I could never pay attention long enough to understand the question, or to know the answer.

I would let people get to me so much that my feelings would be hurt constantly because of the mocking and teasing. When I was being talked to by the teacher whether in front of the others, or not I could feel myself turning a hot red. I used to cry a lot in my school, and I didn't like going.

One time really comes to mind. Our class had a film on war and as usual I was daydreaming and not paying attention. When the film was over we went back to our class and Mr. Handcheroff our school teacher asked questions on the film. He planned a game to go with these questions. Those who couldn't answer the questions given to them would have to stand in the corner of the Principal's classroom while his class was

in session. I thought for sure he'd ask me, and the more I thought about it the more I couldn't control myself, and as I had before I started to cry. Then out of embarrassment I put my head on top of my desk. I wrapped my arms around my head tightly and over my ears so that the talking of the teacher and the laughter of the others sounded as distorted as they always did to me in the first place. I thought I hated them, I'm almost sure I did. I never did go stand in the corner of the Principal's class. I was not even asked a question, not even about why I was crying. I guess my crying was so regular that it was well known and associated with my actions and reactions.

Today I still don't really understand my fear of others, or why I was like that. There it is, 17 years later and I'm full of questions and answers; I'm not afraid of being wrong in my answers; I know I won't be punished if I'm not correct.

Another thing I don't clearly understand is why wasn't I helped to get out of that shell, that trap?

Perhaps if I would have had help then I could have been a happier, better, freer person a lot sooner..

Easter

SONIA BARTEK



Illustration: Pippa Smyth

One day in the year men in Czechoslovakia have a right to hit women. That day is on Easter. Not only can the husband hit his wife, but also his friends' wives, neighbours, relatives, female co-workers, or his intolerable mother-in-law. On that day each male has the right to hit everyone of the opposite sex—no age limit.

However, the beating procedure is done with a special instrument named a *tatar* (in some dialects). The *tatar* is a willow twist or an India rubber twine twist decorated with different coloured ribbons on the end. In some parts of the country, men prefer to use a twig of the juniper tree. For those who never have experienced a beating with juniper, I can tell you that it is the same as being beaten by hot nettle. The whipping procedure is done on women's legs; the behind is also a tolerable place. The goal is not to whip a woman to death; it can be done just a few times and more symbolically than

truly, because if each man takes his job seriously, the women will not be usable for whippings anymore. The females really enjoy this kind of attention. Even though they try to protect themselves from whippers and scream "Stop, stop," they don't truly mean it. Whipping is more for fun than to really hurt somebody.

After the whipping, women treat the whippers with glasses of alcoholic drinks—usually brandy or the little girls give boys chocolate eggs, chocolate rabbits, or some jelly candies. The eggs are hard-cooked eggs and decorated with ornaments or Easter pictures. When a man receives or drinks his whipping wage, he immediately goes to another woman's home, so as not to lose time. In cities, men mostly visit the places of women who they know personally. Since the city is big and if men don't want to miss a woman who they care about, they have to be organized. Because to whip a women again, they have to wait until next Easter comes.

The Last Goodbye

SONIA ELMADANI

It rains on and on. The day is gray, and wet. Central Park is in full bloom. Spring is here in spite of the rain. The smell of Acacia, Violets and Easter lily fills the air. A water fountain with a little cupid smiles from the corner of his lips. Despite the rainy day, the path leads to the end of the park.

The old hospital building looks more sad and gray today than ever. Upstairs on the first floor at the end of the hallway there were a few white beds. Unfortunately there was not enough room and beds for everybody.

Most of the young patients were victims of incurable disease. The truth is that the patients were uncared for, waiting for an uncertain future. The last bed was in the corner of the hallway. The young boy hardly talked while leaning on two large comfortable pillows. The only cheerful thing was the fresh flowers on the night table. A diary was in his hands. He tried hard to put some lasting words and messages into it. No one knew that the diary he possessed created dignity.

Only one person knew about it and that was his best friend. He kept the secret to the last day. It was heart breaking. He was only 18. For most of his life he had had a dream to one day be a teacher. Unfortunately he made only a year of that dream. He didn't eat much; most of the food he put aside. His big beautiful eyes tried to say something. He spoke very slowly. He asked how the weather was outside, and that it must be spring. He asked for his best friends, and wondered why they didn't show up. Today he was also asking if his sister had had her baby yet. His last wish was that it would be

a beautiful little girl. He asked to name her, Gordana. A long time ago there was a story about a princess with that very same name.

His wish came true. It was a little girl, and his last wish was granted. He leaned on his hands for a kiss and a last goodbye. Visiting time was over. Outside it was a sunny afternoon again. It was so sad, life is beautiful in the beginning and often ends tragically. The eventful day passed. Walking through the streets you could hear church bells ringing sadly. It was an old saying, where sad bells ring somebody has passed away. The sad truth was that the young boy passed away early that morning on Easter Sunday.

Tears were rolling down their cheeks. Easter Sunday brings joys and signs of spring, but this Easter Sunday life was sad and tearful. Easter Sunday is, in most traditions, not the time to put the deceased to rest. The second day of Easter was glorious with beautiful flowers everywhere. Two young girls, dressed in white just as if they were going for a wedding, were walking in front of the dead boy. They held two satin pillows with his graduating ring. Two boys in white formal suits were walking at the end folding evergreen trees as the two symbols of youth. A procession of thousands was slowly going in silence. A tense feeling was in the air and it was full of sadness. There wasn't a person in the crowd without tears. They walked slowly to the last resting place of their friend, brother and uncle honored silently with their last words of goodbye.

Clash

YOUKO YOKOTA

Last month I stayed in a Canadian home. I enjoyed it very much. But, little by little we began to clash.

She is a Christian. She said, "You say Amen! You pray. We will read the Bible together."

I have a Japanese religion named "Nichiren."

She forced Christianity on me. She believes the earth was made by God. She said, "Jesus asks, 'Do you know me?' He accepts anybody Japanese, Chinese, American, Indian... But, Buddhism is different. Buddha died. Why do you worship? Buddha isn't the answer. Jesus came to life. Come to Jesus's heart like me. I am happy and peaceful."

I said, "But in Japan it is my family's religion. We have believed for a long time. You and I grew up in different environments. Japan and Canada are different. But Christianity and Buddhism are philosophies which are very similar."

She didn't understand. At least I don't think so. Then

I left with a smiling face.

The next day my Japanese friend came to her house. My friend's name is Fusako. I talked to Fusako about religion.

Mrs. Martin said, "Why don't you have a smiling face today?"

I said, "Because I don't want to hear about Christianity. I don't go to church." But she talked more about Christianity.

Fusako understood my heart. She can speak English very well. She talked to Mrs. Martin about the way I felt. Mrs. Martin didn't change her thinking.

She is every day saying and thinking, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus..."

Fusako said, "I have nothing more to say about it to her. She doesn't understand, doesn't progress."

I said, "O.K. Thank you. I know."

Better Late Than Never

E.H.

There is a proverb which states, "Better late than never." This is true of myself. Where it comes to doing things, I get them done eventually.

Doing the important things in life, such as keeping appointments, meeting someone at a specific place and time and being somewhere at a specified time; i.e. a doctor's appointment, seem to get put off.

Mornings seem to be the worst for me, as it appears sleep is more important. It is true when people say that they hate the thought of getting up or waking up. This really applies to me. If there was a way to start my day at twelve noon, I would find it.

It's not that I never keep appointments, it's just that

I'm always late. When it is crucially essential that I be somewhere, I show up, but as usual I am more than a few minutes late. An example is my appearance in court. Of course I usually have an excuse that seems valid to me.

This is also true of handing in assignments for courses. I have a habit of putting them off to the very last minute. They are handed in, but once again late and with a valid excuse, invented by me. These excuses usually range from reasonable to totally outrageous.

Once again this proverb applies to me. As I use "Better late than never," in practically every aspect of my life.

TRANSITIONS

LATER WRITING



Yoko Yokota

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Photo: Ann E. Yow

My Mother

HONG NGO

This weekend will be my traditional New Year. There is no excitement in my home at all. I knew it would be New Year, but Phoung didn't. Yesterday, she yelled when she found out about New Year from Dianne on the phone. "Sister, did you know that this weekend is our New Year?" I stopped my sewing and looked at her without saying a word. "Do we have something to celebrate it?" I said, "Yes, but we will celebrate it very simply." And then during the time we were talking she groomed my hair while I was sewing. She tried to convince me to cut my hair again. She asked me, "Do you know that you look like mom when you pin your hair up and you look older too. I don't like it. Please, have short hair. Believe me, you look younger and nice when you have short hair." I jokingly interrupted her, "Do you mean I look ugly with my long hair?" "No, I didn't mean that, but you look older and you remind me of our mother," she said. At that time, I understood why she doesn't like it when I have long hair. It's probably not because I look younger or older, it is because I look like our mother, and it may make her feel sad.

Every time I look at myself in the mirror, I realize right away that I look like my mother, especially when I pile my hair up. I often see my mom in the mirror through my picture, and I see her look at me with sweet eyes. Sometimes I like it, but sometimes I'm afraid of myself. I thought that it was my imagination and it was because I missed her very much. As a result, I saw her through my reflection in the mirror. Anyway, that's one more of the reasons why I don't often look at myself in the mirror. Now, I surely know that I really look like my mother.

Phuong reminded me of our mother when she groomed my hair. When I was in High School, every time I shampooed my hair, my mother squeezed lemons

and scented my hair. She said that it helped my hair to be healthier and grow faster. At first, I didn't like it, but later on, I loved it because most of my friends in school said that I had beautiful hair. And then she no longer took care of my hair after I got married. Even I didn't have time to take care of it. There were some days I didn't have time to comb my hair if I slept late. In a hurry, I grabbed the barrette to pin it up. And then, when I went to bed very late that night I remembered that I didn't comb my hair. Nevertheless, at that time lying down was more necessary than combing hair.

I remember after a few years being married I came home to visit with my family and let my mother know that my family-in-law planned to escape. It meant I had to go with them. At that time my parents hadn't decided to leave Vietnam yet. They finally decided to leave when my two younger brothers, Ted and Antoine, were old enough to join the Army. The communists wanted to arrest them to send them to the war to fight in Cambodia or somewhere else. My father had no choice. He had to let them escape right away. Anyway, when I told my mother that bad news I was sitting on the stairs next to the kitchen in my house. My mother groomed my hair and cried. I cried for my own reasons. I cried for missing my mother's soft and warm hands. I cried because I couldn't tell her how I lived with my family-in-law. Actually, I didn't want to tell her. My parents were happy because they thought that I had a happy life when I lived with my family-in-law. I was happy because they were happy. That was why I didn't want to let them down about my marriage. I thought that if only I suffered, it was better than letting my family be disappointed. Anyway, until now I still wonder whether I did the right thing or not. And that was the last time my mother groomed my hair. I miss her very much.

Up in Smoke

PATRICE ABRAHAM

It was a warm spring day, when I moved to the small island. The lush green forest contained very tall, strong trees. This move was a lifelong dream come true. Since I was 15 years old, I told myself I would retire at the age of 35. To have seclusion and tranquillity was something finally attainable.

The cool nights were blacker than black. Light-footed deer bumped up against my trailer in the night. This solitude was new to me, and I was happy at last.

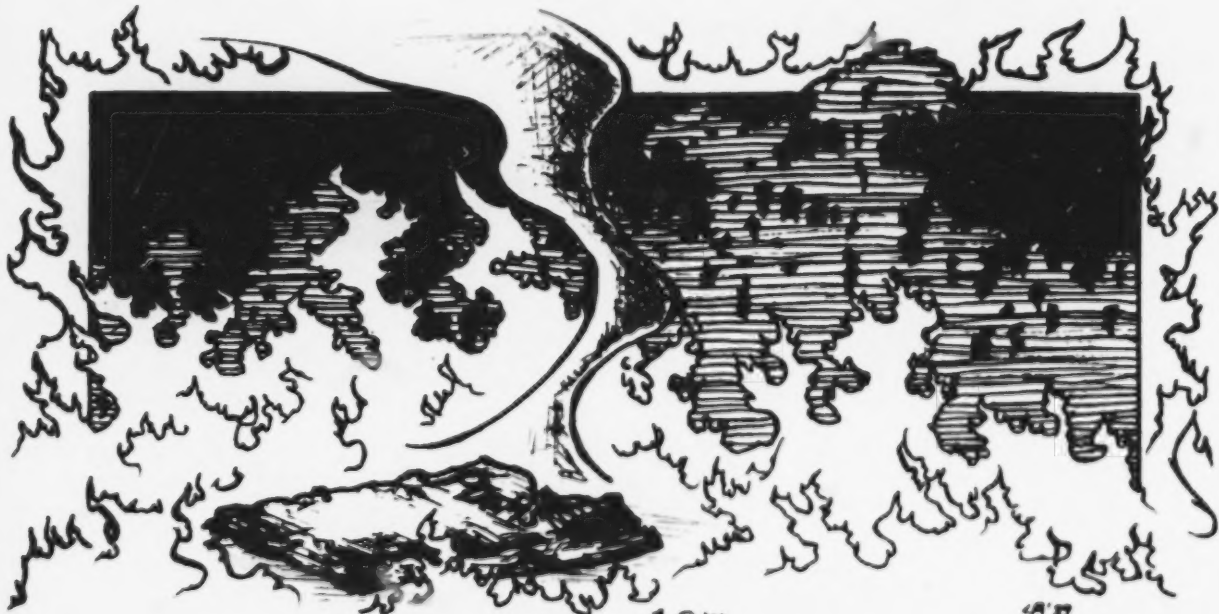
My teenage son came for a weekend visit. It started out smoothly enough. Then, things took a turn for the worse when we had an argument about his alcohol consumption. He stormed out of the trailer into the night. I was left alone to cry and wonder where I went wrong with him.

On his way out the door, he inadvertently knocked over a waste paper basket. Spilled Kleenex tissues caught fire quickly in front of a tiny space heater. I

grabbed the cage with my pet gerbil inside as the fire quickly spread to the curtains. There were two propane tanks on the trailer so I wasn't about to hang around.

I ran to my neighbour and asked for help. I then phoned the volunteer fire department. My neighbour had a long hose stretching from his place to mine. It was too late. The propane tanks exploded with an enormous bang, which hurt my ears. By the time the firemen arrived the trailer was completely engulfed in flames. The trees surrounding the trailer were the main concern of the firemen.

I lost more than possessions in that fire. I lost faith that anything I could plan for myself would stay as planned. I lost some poetry that I had written in the wee hours of the mornings. No one had ever laid eyes on this poetry. I was saving it to show all at once. I lost my inspiration for writing. I can only be thankful neither my son nor myself lost our lives.



Love, Hate and Jealousy

AMIRA AABEDI

Love, jealousy and hate caused a young man's death. The problem started right after the break up between Halla and her fiancé, Samer. They had been engaged to be married for almost a year when for reasons unknown to me, Halla decided to go her own way. Samer was hurt; he claimed that he loved Halla and would not let her go.

Samer kept on trying to win Halla's love back. He sent her gifts, flowers, and many love letters. His effort was in vain – Halla was firm in her decision; she was not moved by his effort. However, Samer's hope was short lived, because news of Halla's new engagement to a new man was soon made known in the village.

Halla was happy and excited about her upcoming wedding. On the other hand, Samer was shocked, hurt and jealous of this man who had won the heart of his ex-girlfriend. He could not think why she had chosen this man over him? He could not see any way that this man was better than him, but Halla had noticed differences. To begin with the new man had a job and he was nicer looking than Samer. Samer was studying to become a teacher. Noir, her new fiancé was the owner of a well-known restaurant.

Three months later Halla and Noir were married. Their wedding day was fun-filled, happy even for Halla's and Noir's families. For Samer's family it was a sad day. They were resentful and they promised revenge. Halla and her husband were happy together. They had a baby boy. Life was good for them and they had just celebrated their second anniversary. They were also celebrating the good news that Halla brought to her husband. She was expecting another baby. Unfortunately their happiness did not last much longer.

I still remember the night on which Noir's life ended along with his dreams. It was a cold winter evening and everyone was inside due to the cold winter but I had asked my mother if I could go to my friend Dalal's house to work on our homework together. Dalal happened to be Samer's niece. My mother liked Dalal

and her parents. Therefore, she did not object.

I was surprised to see Samer and many members of Dalal's family there. It looked like they were having a family meeting. Their voices sounded loud and angry as Dalal and I walked to the room. They looked anxious for us to leave. They did not have to wait long because we were anxious to go to Dalal's room and do our homework. About 9:30 the meeting was over. I could hear the voices saying good night to Dalal's parents. At ten it was time for me to leave.

When I got home I was so tired that I did not mind when my mother asked me to go to bed. It felt like seconds before I was awakened to the sound of voices. They sounded angry at something. It took a few minutes before I was sure that it was not a dream. Slowly I got up, walked toward the door, opened it and walked out into the balcony where the voices were coming from. I heard my father's voice asking the officer if he would like some coffee.

The word officer made me feel uncomfortable because I thought it had to do with Fares, my older brother, who was always getting into trouble with the law. This time I was wrong. Many people stood around looking toward something that lay in the middle of the road. Police officers were everywhere. Some of them were taking pictures and many other police activities were going on. I wondered what it was this time.

I looked at my mother who was standing by my side and asked, "What is going on? What has happened?" My mother said she really did not know for sure. There were gun shots and the police came to check it out. She told me to go back to sleep but I could not do that. I had to find out what was the matter. I listened to the people talk. Each one gave a different account of what had just happened.

Later I learned that the thing on the ground was a dead body. It felt like a month before the police removed it and asked the people to go home. Later that week we found out the story behind the body. After awhile



Photo: Ann E. Yow

people forgot what had happened between Halla and Noir except Samer who had promised revenge and finally went through with it. He found out that Noir was going to be out late visiting some friends and knew that Noir would be walking home by himself. He waited for his rival until he passed by and then shot him to death leaving his body on the road. Samer went home and waited for the police to come for him. Samer finally got his revenge. He had killed Noir and ended his happiness. He left a little boy without a father and another baby coming into a world full of hate and ugliness, a world

full of self-centered people who would do anything to please their ego regardless of whom they hurt or destroy.

What about Samer? Was spending his life in prison worth it? He had claimed that he loved Halla. Did he think about what killing her husband might do to her? No, I do not think he loved her. Love means that people have to give up the person they love if that is what makes the other person happy. Love is sacrifice. He should have let Halla live her life with the man who made her happy. Unfortunately not everyone who claims to be in love knows the true meaning of love.

The Wish

JUANITA

It was early morning when the 8 year old boy awakened from sound sleep. He became wide awake instantly. He sat on the edge of his bed for a moment as if reviewing and putting his thoughts in order; his feet made contact with the uncarpeted floor and he involuntarily shivered. He dressed, still sitting on the side of the bed. He shared the room with his brother, and as he departed from the room was conscious of the fact that he did not want to disturb his sleeping brother. It was still dark outside, as he walked towards the property line. He encountered no difficulty as he was familiar to the surroundings. There was a chill in the air; he pulled his lightweight jacket closer around him, mainly out of habit. He was free of worry and felt energized. He must have walked for what seemed like hours towards the direction of the ocean. He did not realize that daylight had made its presence. It must have occurred suddenly! As he approached the ocean front,

there was no longer a chill, the atmosphere was now warm. He was suddenly joined by his mother. She said, "I have been following you for the past hour." He did not demonstrate surprise by her presence. They sat on the embankment overlooking the ocean; there was still evidence of dampness on the grass, but not enough to saturate their clothing. They appeared to be enjoying their own individual silence. She put her arm around his shoulders and said, "Happy Birthday Tommy." He was taken aback, as he had completely forgotten 'today' was his birthday. She continued, "Today is the most important day of your life. Eight years ago, you were given to your father and I as a gift from God: whatever you desire today is yours." He was moved by her words. She did not interrupt his silence. Suddenly as if returning from a far place he said, "My desire is not to attend school today." His mother smiled, embraced him and said, "You do not have to go to school today."

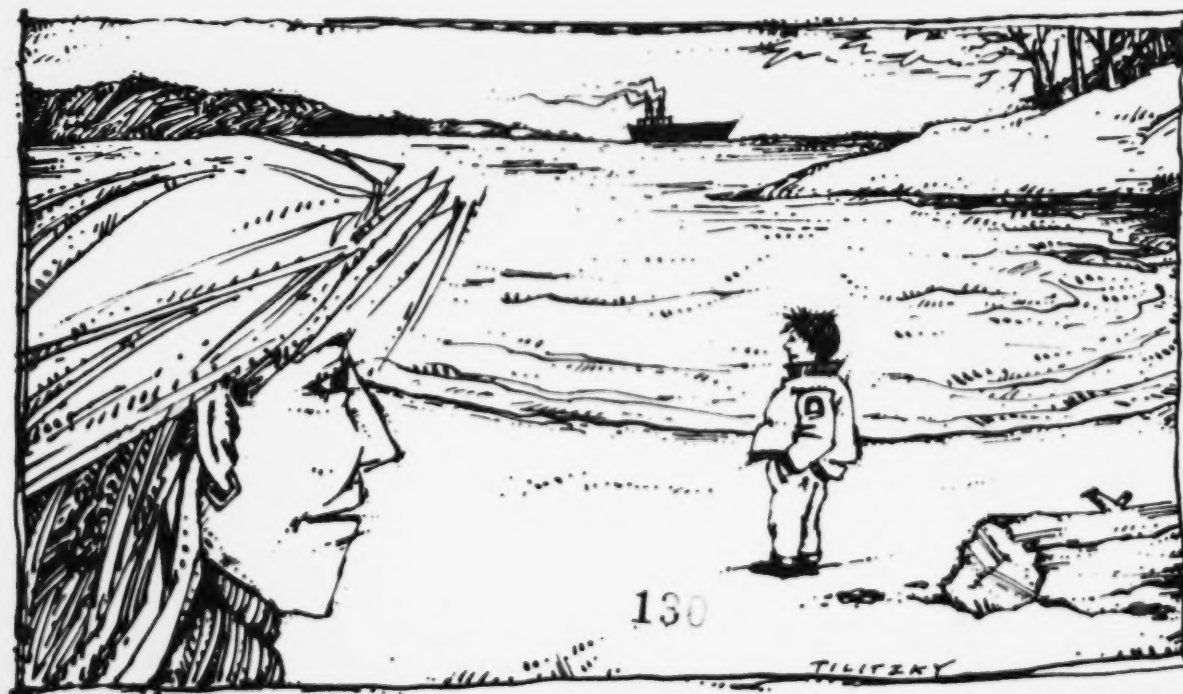


Illustration: Marian Tiltzky

CONVERSATION WITH A NEW LITERATE

HENRY C. AMOROSO, JR.

What follows is an interview with an 18 year old prisoner soon after he learned how to read and write. This is a man who, in today's euphemism, would be called a dysfunctional learner. The conversation affords the reader a simple, direct, and moving account of how he learned about reading and how he

learned to learn. The power of this interview lies in the fact that it underscores the central importance to the illiterate adult of a caring, connected relationship established by the teacher. The interview format generates insights into the learner's world and into the part teachers can play in promoting authentic learning.

Q. Did your tutor help you with your reading? Tell me a bit about it.

A. He started with little words and stuff and finally I got through real good and I just started to learn how to read in the last year since I first come and he'd keep giving me books until he got one that I liked. He's still doing this, too.

Q. Sometimes he may bring in something that you like and sometimes not, right?

A. Yeah.

Q. I mean it's not that you have to read anything. What you like, you read.

A. He tells me to read 15 pages out of each one and if I don't like it by then, put it down and get another one.

Q. Has progress been very slow or very fast?

A. It's been coming fast because words I didn't know in a book (the definition and stuff), I'd have a whole bunch of 'em. Now I just have about eight or nine.

Q. Do you ever feel that you're not making progress fast enough? Do you get impatient with yourself?

A. No. 'Cause everybody's been telling that I've been doing real good 'cause they see the stuff I've been writing. They can look at it and say I coming along real good.

Q. Well, what is it exactly that is helping you concentrate on your reading?

A. I guess knowing that I ain't the only one that cares about me knowing how to read and knowing all that stuff.

Q. I know you've been writing stories.

A. Yeah. Telling people about it. See, I know stuff that I didn't know before. When somebody starts a conversation about something I had done read, shoot, I can jump right off into it. Use to I'd just sit down and listen to 'em talk. Now I can tell some stories.

Q. Did your tutor ever ask you what you were interested in and write stories about that and then bring them down and read with you?

A. Yeah, the first time he come he asked us what all we like and I told him women, cars, and a whole bunch of stuff and he wrote some short stories about it and I caught him on a mistake about it, too. Yeah, he wrote a story and he put two pages of the same thing in there.

Q. Do you ever remember in grade school a teacher who tried that with you? Asked you what you were interested in or kind of met you half-way?

A. No. Yeah, I do. A teacher, when I was in the sixth Grade at Richmond school...a teacher named Miss Scrushal...yeah she was a crazy. She asked me all kinds of stuff and she knowed I didn't know how to read and she'd tell me. Gave me a book that had pictures of the words and I could read that. It had an eye for I and a car for car and all that stuff.

Q. When you were in the sixth Grade were there other students like you?

THEORY

PRACTICE

A. I'm not really sure 'cause everybody could read except this little girl and me.

Q. One of the other students in class?

A. It ended up me and her was going together for a while.

Q. Think back now as far as you can go—first Grade, second Grade, third Grade—how exactly do you think the things Lee has been doing with you have been different than what you've done in grade school in learning to read?

A. Well, I don't know if it was me that didn't care. Here I care and Lee, he cares. At least that's my impression anyway and I don't know if it was me that didn't care or the teachers that didn't care.

Q. Did they treat you any differently than Lee has been treating you?

A. Yeah. You know they'd be giving spelling tests and stuff and I'd done skipped three or four days and I didn't know what was going on. She'd tell me to put my head down on the desk and if I didn't know a word she'd give me a dictionary and tell me to look it up. And here I am I don't even know how to spell the word. She'd have me go to the dictionary and look the word up. In here, if I don't know a word, Lee'll try to tell me a definition of it. If he can't come up with a good one he'll look in the dictionary for it.

Q. If somehow we could go back to the sixth Grade and meet your teachers, what would you tell them about how they should have been teaching you to read?

A. Instead of them picking out what you would read, you should be allowed to pick out what you want to read. They like certain things and we like certain things.

Q. If you had a chance right now, to teach someone in the unit to read, what would you do and how would you do it?

A. There was Dan here who didn't know how to read.

Q. Tell me a little about that.

A. Well, he couldn't hardly write his name, so I started doing like Lee did. I'd stay in there with him about 2 or 3 hours. I had him write 'cat.' He had a spelling test on it. I had him write it out 20 times. Until he knowed it. He had about 15 words and then I'd give him a little old test on 'em and he'd spell 'em and I'd just sit there till he got 'em right.

Q. If there is a word that your friend comes to and he doesn't know how to pronounce it, how would you teach him that word?

A. Look in there and find a word that I do know. First I'd break it down and sound out the other word. I had a word 'indistinguishable' and I didn't know what the hell that word was. He broke it down and said 'Un' is always the opposite and then he said, "What is this word right here?" Then I said "Distinguished." He said "All right." He put 'able' on it and

I said, "Undistinguishable."

Q. Have you tried it?

A. Yeah, I'm working hard and I done good last night.

Q. What would happen if you went up there and just gave this friend a book, a pencil and a piece of paper and said "Do the work."

A. Well, it won't work. If a person don't know nothing he ain't going to learn nothing like that. You know, you got to spend a little time with him...let him know that you care just as much as you can.

Q. Is it important that you be very strict with a person?

A. No, be lenient with him. Don't get upset 'cause they don't know how to do nothing...don't know how to read nothing.

Q. What happens if the person makes a lot of mistakes? What would you do?

A. Show him how to correct 'em and let him, so he knows how to correct 'em himself.

Q. What would your former teachers think about what you're saying?

A. Probably the opposite. If a teacher brings in something you know and like it they ain't gonna read it. All they going to do is cut up where they're at. Think that's something they really want to like?

Q. Is that really why you didn't do well back in grade school?

A. I wanted to know how to read 'cause somebody would show me something and say "Check this out," and I'd look at it and act like I know what they wrote and I'd say "Yeah, that's all right" and don't even know what the hell it was and I really didn't care that I didn't know 'cause right then what all I was doing I didn't need to know nothing about a book or nothing. I was making money.

Q. Still, not knowing how to read or write, did that make you feel bad?

A. My old lady, this whore, she tried to teach me how to read.

Q. What do you read when you read now? Why do you read?

A. It takes you away. Gets you out of here for a while. It's something that they can't take away from you and it helps me. I can always find some word like some of them words I don't know how to spell, after I learn how to spell it and everything, I can do something else with that word.

Q. You know, I was out to a high school about six months ago and I was talking with the head of the English Department. Here is a man who is responsible for supervising the teachers who teach English and writing to high school students. You

know what his idea was about students in high school who don't read? He says that it doesn't matter anyway. Students can get their information and pleasure off TV or radio or whatever. They don't need to know how to read. How do you react to that?

A. Well, that ain't true. I didn't get nothing off TV or the radio except songs. Ain't nobody listening to news or anything. You ain't gonna see no dude that dropped out of school watching no news or wanting to know what all is going on. If you ever see him he's going to be listening to the radio or he's going to be out partying. That dude in the English program he ain't all there. That's a man that don't care right there. He thinks they don't care. They'd care if they had something to care about.

Q. When you get out of here and you know how to read and write, do you think you're going to read and write for the same reasons that you are doing in here?

A. Well, when I get out I want to go to technical school. I tried to get in up there one time and they wouldn't let me. I didn't know how to read and they gave me a test and I couldn't fill it out so I left. There's plenty of stuff I want to read on the street. It's helpful when you go up to a store and they have a big old sign on the door "Closed until you all want to open us up," and you can't even read it.

Q. Let me ask a couple of more things on that point. Let's say you get out of here and you go to technical school and you decide that you are going to become a teacher. You've come up the hard way and you're going to want to pass on what you know to others. You become a high school teacher and there's a student in your class who is 17 years old and

he's unmotivated. He doesn't care about reading. What would you do?

A. First of all, I'd try to be friends with the dude. I'd let him know what I used to be like but it didn't work and I went to the penitentiary. I got time and went to the penitentiary and I didn't care. Then I seen everybody reading these books and stuff and then I cared about reading. So I learned how to read and you can, too. You know you have to be true with the dude, and let him know you care about him. I care if you're going to get an education or not 'cause I know what it's like out there.

Q. I'm working at a school for kids that get into trouble...you know beating up on kids or skipping school. One of the teachers at the school had the following attitude: "I'm here to teach you; if you want it you can have it, but if you don't want it that's your decision." What do you think about this attitude?

A. You know you can't just jump right in and teach somebody like that. They are the kind you'll have to take a lot of time on.

Q. One more question. I'm going to be talking to teachers about what they should do to help 17 year old kids who are in high school and can't read. What should I tell them?

A. They need to try to understand where we are. We're just kids trying to learn, and they had to learn. They see how hard it is for us. It might not have been hard for them. It might not all come to us like that. They're going to have to try to understand where everybody else is instead of just where they're going.

An Afterthought

The learner's views, although spoken from a prisoner's perspective, have obvious implications for all teachers. For him, becoming literate did not start with a task-oriented emphasis on academic skills but with the consideration, "Let's get to know each other and talk about some of your likes and some of my likes and work it out together." In place of a businesslike, teacher-student interaction that characterizes so much of the literature on effective schooling, the teacher offered a pedagogy of communication that resulted in the student's learning "I ain't the only one that cares about me reading." This statement, however simple, affirms the critical role of connectedness between the teacher and learner. The learner's needs were entirely personal: He

valued someone who would listen to him, someone who was sincerely interested in his life, someone who could provide support in times of stress or anxiety. In other words, he was made to feel that his teacher cared about him getting an education not because he was a dysfunctional student but because he was a person with worth and dignity. In truth, the learner was better able to see his teacher as a friend who understood him and was capable of teaching him the right things. With dialogue as the method and a caring and supportive relationship as the mode of interacting, literacy learning became a real act of self-learning expression, responsibility and reflection.

CONTRIBUTORS

PREVIOUS CONTRIBUTORS

The following writers all appeared previously in Voices, and biographical notes for them are included in issues #1 or #2:

LISA BANKS

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MARK MCCUE

JAMES MCKOEN

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HONG NGO

GARY PHARNESS

LEE WEINSTEIN

NEW CONTRIBUTORS

AMIRA AABEDI When I first heard about Invergarry I thought it was just another school, but soon the teachers proved to me the difference. In the short time they worked with me, not only my reading and writing improved but also my self-esteem.

PATRICE ABRAHAM attended Adult Basic Education classes through Douglas College, New Westminster.

JAMES AKER attended an Adult Basic Education class at North Idaho College.

HENRY AMOROSO is a faculty member in the College of Education, University of Southern Maine, at Gorham, Maine.

RICHARD BROOKS Richard, a father of two, returned to school after a serious accident made it impossible for him to continue in his work. He is currently upgrading his skills and hopes to find employment in the computer field.

LINDA CALAHAN I have always felt unable to write anything. I could barely write letters let alone a story. It seemed as if I had nothing to say that anyone would be interested in hearing. I've reached a time in my life when I've realized that I have so many words and experiences that need to come out, and because I'm not good at verbalizing things I have discovered that writing is the tool that works best for me. I enjoy

the writing class and the opportunity to share and discuss my writing with other students as they likewise share theirs with me. There is a certain freedom in being able to see on paper what I've held inside for years.

MARIA CERRATO Recently immigrated from Nicaragua, Maria enjoys her four children, learning and making children's clothing. She would like to open a small clothing outlet, while continuing to improve her English.

C.G. attended Adult Basic Education classes through Douglas College, New Westminster.

FRANCISCO CHAVEZ I'm happy to live in Canada and really lucky to be part of the "Invergarry School" which always opens the door to all the people who want literacy.

JULIA CHAVEZ I am from Peru. I came to Canada 3 years ago. When I came to this country I was very nervous because I didn't understand anything that other people spoke; I watched T.V. and I didn't understand. For 4 months I lived with this problem. One day my son-in-law told me and my husband to come to study English. I thought, "I'm very old. Could I learn?" In my mind I asked this question every day. The first time I came to Invergarry School I met many old people like me who did not speak any English. I never thought that I could learn to speak, read and write English. Now I think that I can.

DAPHNE GEORGE I am going to Malaspina College, Duncan and getting my A.B.E. English. I like it here. It helps me to read and write better. I've been out of school 14 years. I plan to get my Grade 12.

E.H. attended Adult Basic Education classes through Douglas College, New Westminster.

GREGORY SCOTT GRANT I am thirty two years old. I have good teachers at Invergarry. I have been going to Invergarry for a few years to improve my writing. At Invergarry School teachers like funny stories and sad stories as well. I am just beginning to catch on to how words go in the sentence and at first it was not easy to find the place where words should go in the sentence. I like all the teachers. They are very good at their jobs. I enjoy learning about writing because there are so many things to know about it. I always have a laugh with the teachers.

ROSE GRASSMANN My name is Roswitha (Rose) Grassmann, born October 30, 1939 in Halle/Saale, East Germany. My immigrating into Canada, Vancouver, B.C., was like coming home after 35 years. Going back to school became for me mandatory to follow my desire to help single parents, especially women. Only through knowledge we become stronger.

PETER HARDER I came here to learn to read and write. I never had a chance before to read and write. I really enjoy coming to school. That's why I never miss coming here.

JACK HUTCHINSON My father died early on in a pipeline accident. I always felt I had no one to talk to. Since starting writing I've become more aware of my feelings. Also, I'm able to say what's on my mind about things which have bothered me for years. All in all, it helps me emotionally as well as improving my reading.

BARINDER JOHAL A serious industrial accident has resulted in many changes in Barinder's life. No longer able to work at his job, Barinder has returned to school to upgrade his skills.

RUDY KLAWER Rudy entered the literacy program two months ago. At the time, his reading was good but he was uncomfortable with writing. His passion is rodeo, calf-roping in particular. "Rodeo" was Rudy's first writing in the program.

A.J. MCLEAN I came to Invergarry Learning Centre to bring my English skills up to the grade twelve level, so I can move on to college to get my degree as a child care worker. Coming here is one of

the best moves I ever made. I really enjoy the positive atmosphere in my classroom.

GEORGE MOODY was born in Prince Rupert around 1910. He spent many years working as a prospector and miner throughout B.C. These stories represent some of his many experiences. He eventually settled in Trail, B.C., where he worked as an assayer and researcher for Cominco. These stories were written as part of his recovery from a stroke which robbed him of his ability to read and write.

AUDREY RASSMUSSEN A grandmother, Audrey has been attending the Invergarry Learning Centre for two years.

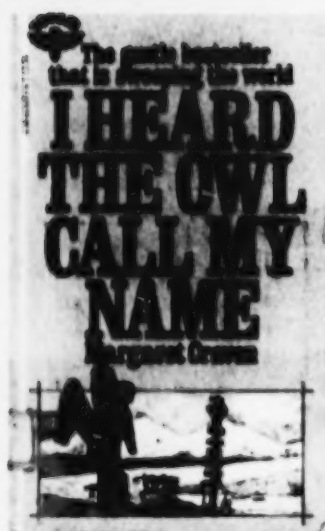
GURDISH SRAN is studying A.B.E. English at Malaspina College.

YOUKO YOKOTA I am 24 years old. I came from Japan, and I have been in Canada 7 months. I knew about Canada from Anne of Green Gables. When I lived in Japan I thought, "I love beautiful nature and I want to come to Canada." I came to Invergarry Learning Centre 5 months ago. I take English class in the morning, then in the afternoons I go to Mark's literacy class. They help us so much. When I came to Canada I couldn't speak English. Now I comprehend English step by step. I am looking forward to speaking and writing very well. When I came to Invergarry Learning Centre I had good experiences and I made good friends. I want to tell everybody about this school!

XUYEN TRUONG A recent immigrant from Vietnam, Xuyen has worked very hard to improve his English communication skills.



Photo: Ann E. Yow



REVIEWS

I HEARD THE OWL CALL MY NAME

MARGARET CRAVEN

This novel was enjoyable to me because it told about a man's life. His life was very hard because he lived in a different culture, and had to learn another language. Finally he understood the nature of his life, and then everybody in the village liked him very much. The novel was teaching me how to live. The man's situation is very similar to mine. I came from a strange place. Now I am learning a new language, and a new way of life just like the man in the book.

—Xuyen Truong

A RIVER RAN OUT OF EDEN

JAMES VANCE MARSHALL

This story takes place on an island near the tip of Alaska. There is a lot of adventure from start to finish. The main characters are Jim, his soft-spoken native wife, their seven year old son, a strange man who comes between Jim and his wife for a short time, and this beautiful golden seal. This story is so well written that once you start reading it, you will become part of the island and all that is happening. You will, I am sure, enjoy this story of the beautiful friendship between a little boy and a seal.

—A. J. McLean

FIREHOUSE MAGAZINE

FIREHOUSE PRODUCTIONS

I can greatly recommend **Firehouse Magazine** for fans of KISS. The magazine is informative, telling you about songs, singers and their trips. I read about Paul Stanley, Gene Simmons, Bruce Kulick, Eric Carr, Peter Criss and an interesting interview with Ace Frehley, also about "KISS Crazy Nights in Europe" and other articles. **Firehouse Magazine** is also full of nice pictures.

—S. B.

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REVIEWS

DREAM SPEAKER

CAM HUBERT

This is a very interesting story from start to finish. It is about a young boy named Peter, who goes from foster home to foster home, institution to institution, before he comes across a home in the forest with these two older native gentlemen known to Peter as "Old Man" and "He Who Would Sing" and where Peter for the first time got to enjoy and love those he was living with. There is so much Peter learns as he goes through each of his new days, and so will anyone who reads Peter's story.

—A.J. McLean

THE TV KID

BETSY BYARS

This is the story of a boy called Lennie who lives with his mother in a motel and has an imaginary friend. Lennie gets bit by a snake and finds out what life is all about. If you like stories like this, you will like this one.

—Harold "Bud" Gaunt

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE ROSE

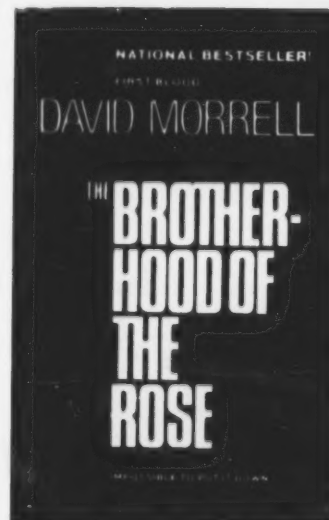
DAVID MORRELL

This novel is full of heart-stopping action. The two main characters, Chris and Saul, were orphans raised by Eliot to be CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) assassins. The story is full of suspense and intrigue and takes place in many cities around the world. If you enjoy a good spy novel you will like this book.

—James McKoen

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Voices

New Writers for New Readers

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and for, learners.

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— **The Wisconsin Vocational Educator,**
The University of Wisconsin, Madison

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— **Literacy Across the Curriculum,**
Dawson College, Montreal

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